Cops bust kidnap gang led by ex-cop, rescue hostage

Story in METRO, A20

Aussie pastor jailed for abuse of RP kids

AN AUSTRALIAN Baptist church missionary was sentenced by an Australian court to eight years in prison yesterday for sexually abusing young boys in the Philippines.

David John Gillard, 57, had pleaded guilty earlier this month to 12 counts of indecency against four boys, all under 16 years old, during four visits to the Philip-

AUSSIE/ A7

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SEC clarifies CAP story: It's interim comptroller

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission yesterday clarified that it had appointed its general accountant, Roberto Manabat, as "interim comptroller" for pre-need firm College Assurance Plan Phils. and not as "interim receiver."

In a letter to CAP dated May 20, SEC

SEC CLARIFIES/ A7

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Saturday, May 24, 2003 ★★★ 90 pages / 12 sections / vol. 18 / no. 165 P15 website: www.inq7.net

RP asked to join Islamic meeting

1st time a DFA head invited by OIC

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

A STOPOVER in San Francisco affords President Macapagal the chance to congratulate Marine Lance Corporal Ogie Sta. Maria, a Fil-Am wounded in Iraq, in the presence of City Mayor Willie Brown Jr. and Mr. Mike Arroyo. The President is due to return home tomorrow at 6 a.m.

By Norman Bordadora

FOR THE FIRST time ever, the country's chief diplomat has been invited to attend the annual meeting of the influential Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, still in the United States for the President's state visit, immediately accepted the unprecedented invitation to the 30th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the OIC in Tehran, Iran.

"I intend to engage the OIC foreign ministers when I go to Tehran and focus on very specific areas of cooperation and partnership," he said in a statement.

Although other Philippine officials have attended OIC ministerial meetings in the past, this is the first time the Philippines has been asked to attend and to be represented by the secretary of foreign affairs. Last year, at the annual meeting in Khartoum, Sudan, the Philippine delegation was led by Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Eduardo Ermita.

The OIC, through its Committee of Eight, supports peace talks between the government and Moro separatist rebels.

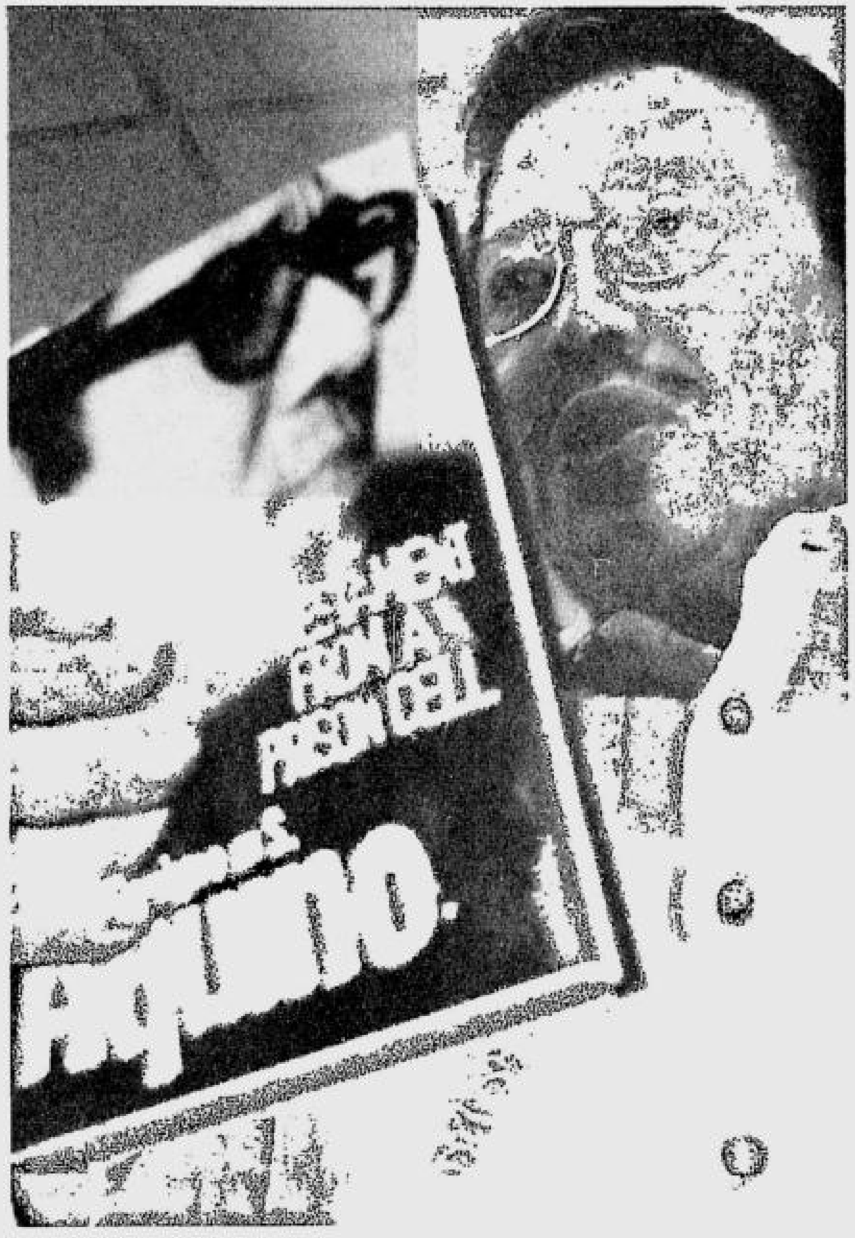
"The secretary is quite happy to accept the invitation from the OIC and will use the occasion as an opportunity to further work for peace in southern Philippines," Foreign Undersecretary Delia Albert said in a news conference. Albert is acting DFA secretary.

The invitation was contained in a diplomatic note from Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi and personally delivered to the Department of Foreign Affairs by Iranian Ambassador Ghoulamraza Yousefi.

The note invited Secretary Ople "to head the Philippine delegation for participating as guest (sic) to the 30th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference."

The Tehran meeting is slated for May 28 to

RP ASKED/ A16



"A SOURCE of inspiration" that has brought him 'closer to God,'" ex-President Estrada says of the book former President Aquino sent him, which he shows off after his hearing at the Sandiganbayan on Friday. The book is a collection of Ninoy Aquino's reflections, letters and other writings while a political prisoner during the Marcos dictatorship.

JOAN BONDOC

Cory sends Erap a gift

By Volt Contreras

JOSEPH Estrada's critics may cringe at hearing him compare himself to the late Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., but it appears that the ex-senator's widow is partly responsible for putting such ideas in his head.

The ousted president yesterday showed up at his hearing at the Sandiganbayan carrying a hard-bound book that he said was a "gift" sent to him last Saturday by former President Corazon Aquino. The book, titled "Testament from a Prison Cell," is a collection of Ninoy's reflections, letters and other writings as a political prisoner of the Marcos dictatorship.

Former President Aquino confirmed to the INQUIRER that she had indeed sent Estrada the book so that "he would pray more," she said. "It is to help him cope," her spokesperson Deedee Siytangco quoted the former President as saying.

CORY/ A18

GMA cuts US trip, goes to Mindanao Monday

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will return from the United States a day earlier than scheduled to check on the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

The President's chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday told reporters that she would be home tomorrow at 6 a.m., and not Monday. "[Her trip] has been cut by a day because she is quite concerned [about] the developments in Mindanao," he said.

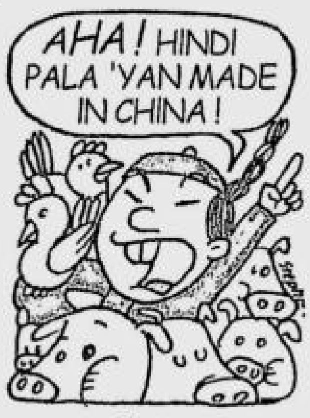
The First Family is now in San Francisco, California, for some private time.

Tiglao said the President's "advisers" had told her to rest the whole day tomorrow to recover from jet lag and her hectic schedule in the United States.

He said the President would deliver her "arrival statement" on Monday at 10 a.m., sign the law against the trafficking of women and minors, and then fly to Cagayan de Oro for a joint military-police command conference.

Tiglao said the President would "assess the anti-terrorism campaign" and

GMA/ A17


AHA! HINDI PALA 'YAN MADE IN CHINA!

Did SARS come from outer space?

PARIS—SARS may have come from space, according to a novel theory aired by a trio of astrobiologists in Britain and India.

In a letter that appears in Saturday's issue of the British medical weekly The Lancet, they say the idea for this came from experiments, carried out in January 2001,

DID SARS/ A19

Stigma is back, cry Muslims in Metro

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE woman has stayed clear of shopping malls outside the Muslim village of Maharlika in Taguig since a bystander shouted at her and called her "Abu," a pointed reference to the Abu Sayyaf bandit group.

The stigma is back, if it ever left at all, and Muslims in Metro Manila are feeling it.

The residents of Maharlika Village, in particular, are again the object of public suspicion, after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the "selective" bombing of "embedded terrorist cells" in parts of Mindanao a week ago.

Things turned from bad to worse last Wednesday, a

STIGMA/ A16

EDWIN BACASMAS

THE FACE says it all. No words are necessary to describe the troubles this elderly evacuee in Munai, Lanao del Norte, has seen since the AFP offensive started.

IRRI: Central Luzon farmers produce Asia's 'greenest rice'

By Gerald Lacuarta

THE FERTILE plains of Central Luzon—the so-called rice granary of the Philippines—have become one of the greenest rice bowls in all of Asia.

Studies conducted by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (Philrice) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) have shown that rice growers in Central Luzon use less insecticide than farmers in other major rice-growing areas in the region.

While many other Asian rice fields continue to use high levels of insecticide and other chemicals, or have even increased their consumption, the rice-growing areas of Central Luzon have been using less and less insecticide since the late 1980s.

But despite the steep decline in insec-

IRRI/ A7

WHO lifts travel advisories to HK, Guangdong

HONG KONG—The World Health Organization lifted its SARS-related travel advisories Friday against Hong Kong and the Chinese province of Guangdong, saying the outbreaks there are under control.

"Guangdong was the first place in the world to have cases of SARS but I am pleased to note that due to the efforts of the local and national health authorities, with support from the WHO, the outbreaks in Guangdong and Hong Kong are being contained," said WHO Director General Gro Harlem Brundtland in Geneva.

WHO still advises against all non-essential travel to the Chinese capital, Beijing, and to the regions of Hebei, Inner Mongolia, Shanxi and Tianjin, as well as to Taiwan, because of continuing new transmissions of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

University of Hong Kong researchers said Friday they had successfully isolated a type of coronavirus that causes SARS in an animal called the masked palm civet that appears to have spread it to humans.

Civet cats

Microbiologist Yuen Kwok-yung told reporters the scientists tested a large number of game animals eaten by people in China's Guangdong province and found the coronavirus in four of

WHO/ A19

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the western section. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/24/03

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Joker's other panel to probe Piatco

By Michael Lim Ubac

HAS Sen. Joker Arroyo buckled to pressure from opposition senators?

The maverick senator, who successfully stood his ground during a tumultuous Senate session on Wednesday, yesterday announced that the Senate public services committee which he chairs has scheduled a hearing on the controversy surrounding the construction of Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

Arroyo announced at a press conference that the public services committee would conduct, in aid of legislation, an investigation next week on the alleged irregularities surrounding Naia 3, particularly the building of the access road connecting it to Terminal 2.

"I'm calling that in my capacity as chair of the public services committee," said Arroyo, who also chairs the Blue Ribbon Committee.

The hearing, to be conducted jointly by the committees on public works and finance, will be held at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday.

A separate inquiry by the blue ribbon would focus on the $2 million reported to have been given to Alfredo Leongson, who served as the public relations man of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), said Arroyo.

"We're working," said Arroyo, reacting to an accusation by opposition Sen. John Osmeña that the Senate committees were not functioning.

Sudden announcement

Arroyo made the sudden announcement two days after the Senate was thrown into turmoil over his refusal to probe allegations regarding a taped conversation on the supposed attempt of a Palace lawyer to demand P3 billion from Fraport AG, the German partner of Piatco, which built Naia 3.

The furor could have led to a reorganization of all the committees of the upper house were it not for the intercession of Acting Senate President Juan Flavier and Majority Leader Loren Legarda.

The flurry of scathing remarks traded in the aftermath of the session made clear the fragility of the political alliance forged between the 13-member ruling bloc in the Senate and the 10 opposition senators comprising the minority.

Arroyo, however, just laughed off suggestions that he was now raising the proverbial white flag. As a congressman, he had gained the reputation of being the House of Representatives' vigilant watchdog regarding public anomalies.

Arroyo told reporters it had always been his stand that the Blue Ribbon Committee could investigate the alleged extortion attempt if evidence independent of the taped conversation existed.

Without other evidence, he said, he could not call a hearing on allegations based on a wiretap.

He declared that the public services committee could never embark on a "fishing expedition" which, he said, was proscribed by the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Explaining his sudden decision to start the inquiry, Arroyo said: "What will the government do? Will they leave (Naia 3) without an access road?"

He said he would subpoena Leongson and other personalities who had a role in the Piatco contracts.

Referring to Leongson, he said, "We're going to ask him where he spent that kind of money."

He said that he would also summon others "if Sen. Edgardo Angara gives us the names (of the persons involved in) the extortion (attempt)."

Osmeña resolution

But Arroyo was silent on whether his decision to open an inquiry was triggered by the filing yesterday of a Senate resolution by Osmeña asking the Senate to investigate the matter.

Osmeña said in his one-page resolution that the Senate should direct its committee on government corporations and public enterprise to inquire "into the options available to the Naia in resolving the question on the operation of Piatco."

Osmeña said the alleged extortion attempt should be investigated because it involved "several issues of vital importance to the economy and to the attractiveness of the Philippines to foreign investments."

Asked to comment on Osmeña's latest move, Arroyo said: "How can you take a guy like that seriously?"

Arroyo elaborated: "Well, he can conduct any kind of investigation (if he wants to). But you know, he conducted an investigation of the Code-NGO. Where is the report? He investigated the Impsa (scandal). Where is the report on Impsa?"

Arroyo said that Osmeña's charge that the committees were not doing their jobs was unfounded.

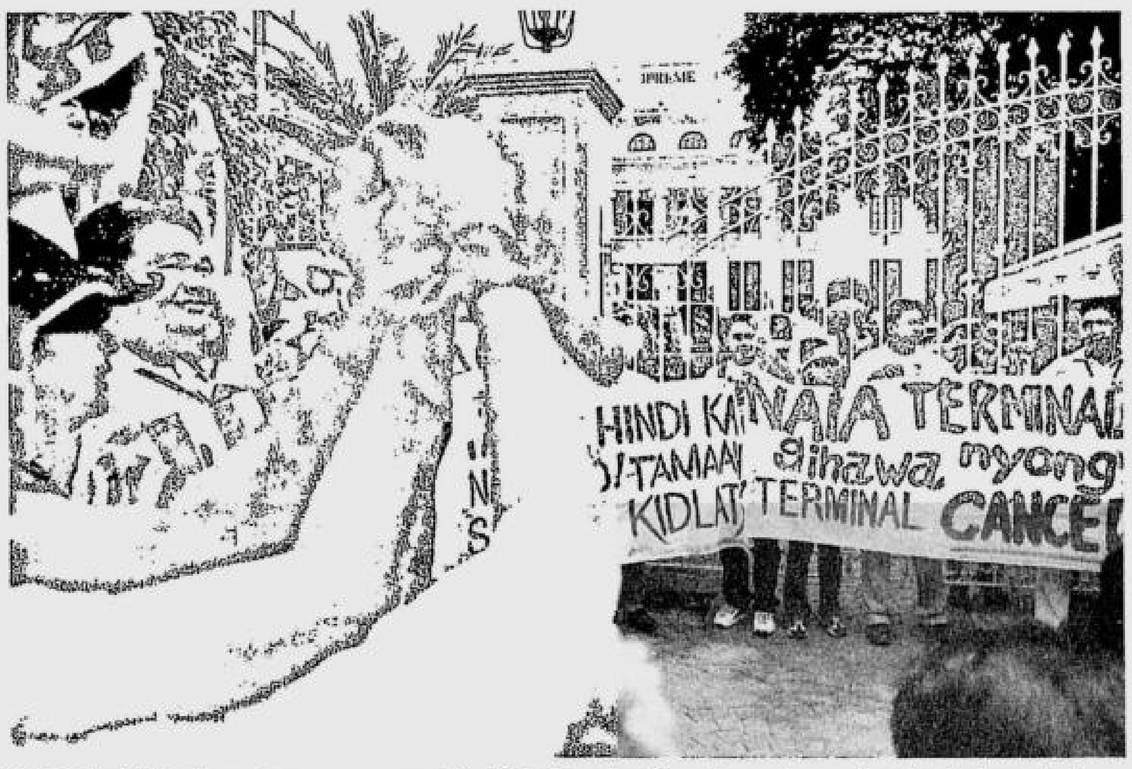
Arroyo had claimed on Thursday that the minority simply didn't have the numbers to wrest control of the Senate leadership.

He branded Osmeña's motion to declare vacant all the chairmanships of the Senate committees a "shotgun reorganization," which contravened the practice in the Senate.

The turmoil in the Senate appeared to be far from over despite Arroyo's announcement of an investigation.

Osmeña said in an interview that he would resurrect his motion when the chamber resumes its session on Monday.

"I will raise that issue. I will raise the issue of the Senate not functioning because they do not want to face up to the problems," said Osmeña.



FORGOTTEN in the controversy surrounding Naia Terminal 3 are its workers, who take their protest against a government takeover of the facility to the Supreme Court. *(See story below.)* JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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'What about us?' Piatco workers ask high court

By Philip C. Tubeza and Abigail Ho

CLAIMING it worked against their interests, employees of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. asked the Supreme Court yesterday to reverse its decision nullifying the firm's contract to build the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

"The Supreme Court decision nullifying the Piatco-GRP contract is anti-worker," Ramil Tamayo, the employees' spokesperson said.

"(The Supreme Court) acted on baseless fears of non-Naia 3 workers that they may be terminated with the operations of Naia 3. It failed to realize it is us, the current workers in Naia 3, who face actual mass termination. The country likewise loses the realization of 30,000 more jobs that the full operation of Naia-3 can generate," he added.

Piatco itself yesterday filed a motion for reconsideration of the tribunal's May 5 decision.

It also blamed taipan Lucio Tan for its current woes, saying the influential businessman was trying to take control of Naia 3.

Tan is owner of Asia's Emerging Dragon Corporation, which also competed in the bidding for the Naia 3 contract.

"At the outset, we would like to disabuse the mind of the honorable court that Piatco, in executing the concession agreement and its amendments, tried to put one over on the government, to the prejudice of the Filipino people," Piatco said in its 92-page motion for reconsideration filed late yesterday afternoon.

"Piatco actually constructed, at no cost to the government, an ultra-modern, state-of-the-art international airport worth at least $350 million to serve the Filipino people," it said.

"If the decision by the Supreme Court will not be reconsidered—paving the way for an imminent government takeover—the government will have to pay the cost of the airport, which is not less than $500 million," Piatco said.

"Since the government has no money appropriated to compensate Piatco, government will either have to raise or impose new taxes or scrimp on funds allotted for other public services and other infrastructure projects. That will prejudice the Filipino people," it added.

Tamayo said directly adversely affected by the tribunal's decision were 3,000 to 5,000 workers, who included construction workers, maintenance personnel and subcontractors.

More than 50 Piatco workers picketed the Supreme Court yesterday morning while their lawyers filed their petition at around 10 a.m.

"We are marching to protest the loss of our jobs. We demand a voice in the controversy. For us, the loss of our jobs is real, not an imagined one like the issues raised by the peitioners to the Supreme Court who moved for the nullification of the Piatco-Naia 3 contract," Tamayo said.

The workers carried placards denouncing the alleged attempt by personalities close to President Macapagal-Arroyo to "extort $70 million from Fraport, a Piatco shareholder, in exchange for a favorable Supreme Court decision."

Piatco said it expected to get much-needed boost from the motion for intervention that employees of the Naia 3) have filed with the Supreme Court yesterday.

It's back to work for 2 of GMA's men

TWO ailing members of the President's Cabinet are expected to be back in harness in the next few days.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, who suffered a slipped disc last week, will likely report for work on Wednesday, while Press Secretary-on-leave Hernani Braganza is expected to reassume his duties in early June.

Bunye, who was supposed to undergo surgery at the Makati Medical Center, was spared the knife when he responded well to regular therapy.

"I hope to be back on Wednesday," a cheerful Bunye said in a brief interview. "I am undergoing therapy twice daily and in between, (enjoying some) bed rest for faster recovery."

Bunye was supposed to be part of President Macapagal-Arroyo's official delegation on her state visit to the United States but he was rushed to the hospital on May 14. He stayed there until May 22.

"I've been closely following the coverage of the presidential visit and we're looking forward to the delivery of pledges made by Washington," he said.

Braganza had earlier gone on medical leave because of diabetes and other related illnesses.

Press Undersecretary Milton Alingod was designated officer in charge until May 31.

Carlito Pablo

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Tiglao: Politics taking shine off GMA's US trip

By Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG said yesterday speculation on the 2004 elections has dimmed the luster of President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to the United States.

"It's a bit of a disappointment that just when the US visit had been very successful . . . we're back to that politics thing," the President's chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao said at a media briefing.

Tiglao refused to answer when asked if he personally wanted to see his boss run for election in 2004.

"*Huwag na. Patibong yan* (Ah, no. That's a trap)," he said, adding:

"I am not here to talk about my personal views."

At least two advisers to the President—Norberto Gonzales and Heherson Alvarez—have urged her to go back on her promise made last Dec. 30 that she would not run in 2004.

But Tiglao said talk of the President possibly reversing her pledge would only "create speculations that might be unnecessary at this point."

In his opinion, the media should highlight not the 2004 elections, but the purported $4-billion bonanza in government and private-sector agreements signed as a result of Ms Macapagal's visit to the US.

"I think that's the problem: We keep on going to something that will take place 11 months from now," he said.

Replying to a question, Tiglao said there would be no gag order on the President's advisers and political leaders who had been publicly clamoring for her to run in 2004.

"At least in the executive branch, the President's order is to buckle down to work," he said.

Asked to respond to former President Joseph Estrada's statement that Ms Macapagal should run if only to legitimize her presidency, Tiglao said the Supreme Court had already ruled on the matter.

"I hope he studies well," Tiglao said by way of commenting on Estrada's other statement that he might run if Ms Macapagal decides to run herself.

"It's a free country. Anyone can run if you're qualified," Tiglao said.

But opposition senators remain unconvinced that the President is not seeking election in 2004.

Sen. John Osmeña told reporters that Ms Macapagal's actions indicated her real plans.

"If your actions are that of a candidate, then you're a candidate," Osmeña said in Filipino. "She's going around giving checks, [meeting with] barangay captains, and has a TV ad, '*Byahe na* (Take a trip)!'"

It was a reference to a TV commercial where the President makes a pitch to the public to try the "roll on, roll off" system of travel across the country, which she recently inaugurated.

"The more she denies, the more she is hurting herself. It's not nice to have a President without credibility," Osmeña said.

In a separate interview, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., said Ms Macapagal was "entitled to change her mind if she wants to run."

"Even criminals recant their sworn statements sometimes," Pimentel said. "Maybe she can take consolation from that admitted fact."

As far as Sen. Rodolfo Biazon is concerned, the President's "political body language is telling us she is keeping her options open." *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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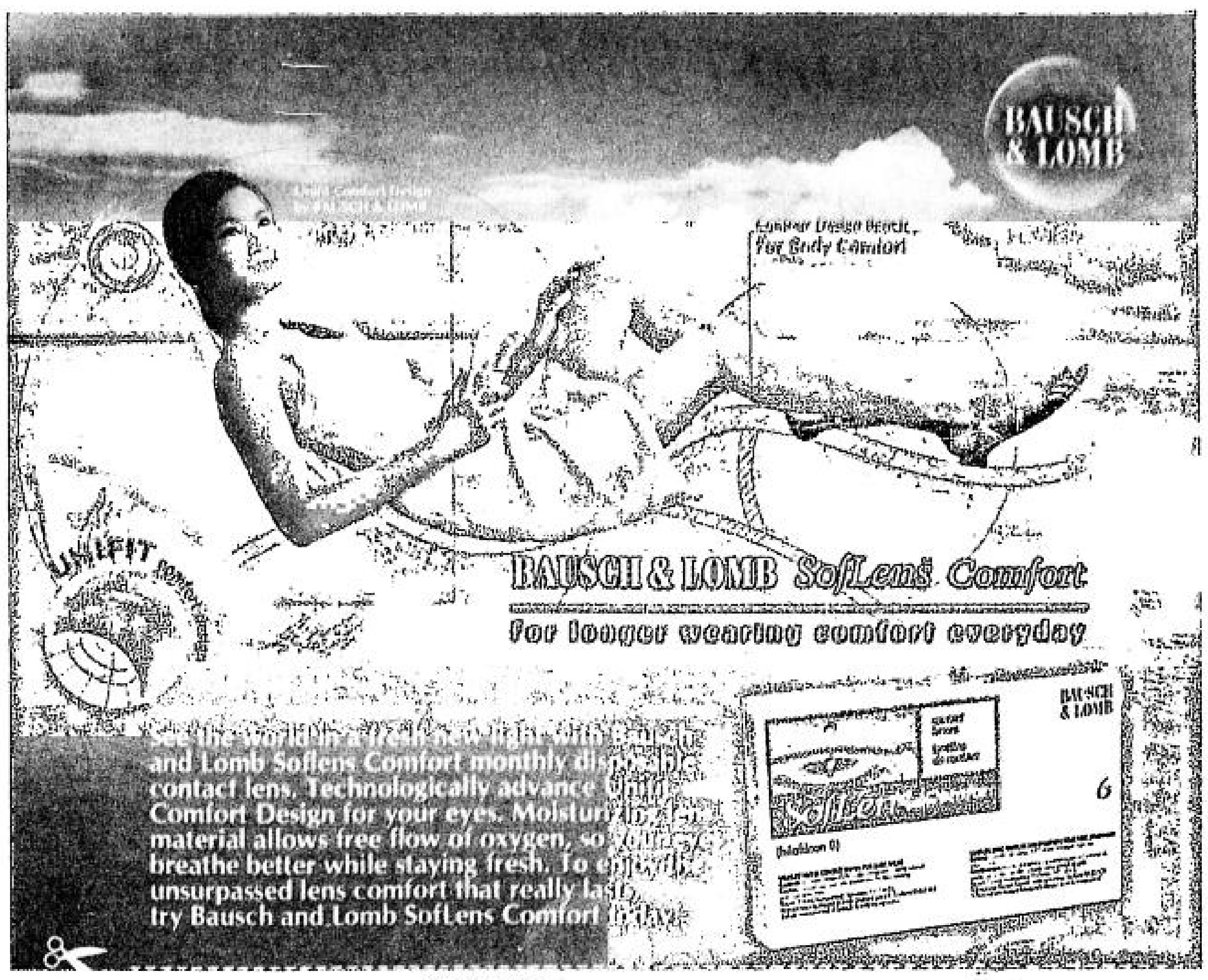

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DIANE OPTICAL	*Pasay Road*
IDEAL VISION CENTER	*Glorietta 2*
MAGNO OPTICAL	*Makati Cinema Sq*
MAGNO OPTICAL	*Park Square*
RITA OPTICAL	*Glorietta 1*
RITA OPTICAL	*Greenbelt*
RITA OPTICAL	*Makati Cinema Sq*
SARABIA OPTICAL	*Glorietta*
SARABIA OPTICAL	*Greenbelt*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*Glorietta 1*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*Glorietta 3*

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GANESH OPTICAL	*Paterno St. Binondo*
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GEORGE OPTICAL	*Binondo*
ICU OPTICAL	*Paterno St. Binondo*
IDEAL VISION CTR.	*SM Centerpoint*
IDEAL VISION CTR.	*SM Manila*
MEGA OPTICAL	*O. Paredes St. Binondo*
NEW RIALTO OPTICAL	*Rizal Ave. Sta. Cruz*
RITA OPTICAL	*Harrison Plaza*
SARABIA OPTICAL	*Robinson's Ermita*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*Robinson's Ermita*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*SM Centerpoint*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*Tutuban Center*
VISION LINE	*Escolta*
WHITE HOUSE OPTICAL	*SM Centerpoint*

SAN JUAN-MANDALUYONG

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CASAJE OPTICAL	*Virramall*
FLORES OPTICAL	*Kalentong St*
GEORGE OPTICAL	*Shoppesville*
GEORGE OPTICAL	*SM Megamall*
GOOD VISION	*SM Megamall*
IDEAL VISION CENTER	*SM Megamall*
J. VINAS OPTICAL	*Shangri-la Plaza*
MAGNO OPTICAL	*Shangri-la Plaza*
MAGNO OPTICAL	*Shoppesville*
N. VINAS OPTICAL	*Virramall*
OPTICAL WORKS	*Shoppesville*
R.D. REYES OPTICAL	*Shoppesville*
RICAFRENTE OPTICAL	*Market Place*
SARABIA OPTICAL	*Robinson's Galleria*
SUCCESS OPTICAL	*Virramall*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*SM Megamall*
THE OPTICAL SHOP	*Robinson's Galleria*
TIFFANY OPTICAL	*Starmall*
V. SARABIA OPTICAL	*SM Megamall*

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ACEBEDO OPTICAL	*Circle C. Congressional*
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IDEAL VISION CTR.	*Gotesco Grand Central*
IDEAL VISION CTR.	*SM City North Edsa*
IDEAL VISION CTR.	*SM Fairview*
LINJUACO OPTICAL	*Ever Gotesco*
LINJUACO OPTICAL	*Panay Ave. QC*
OPTICAL WORKS	*SM City, North Edsa*
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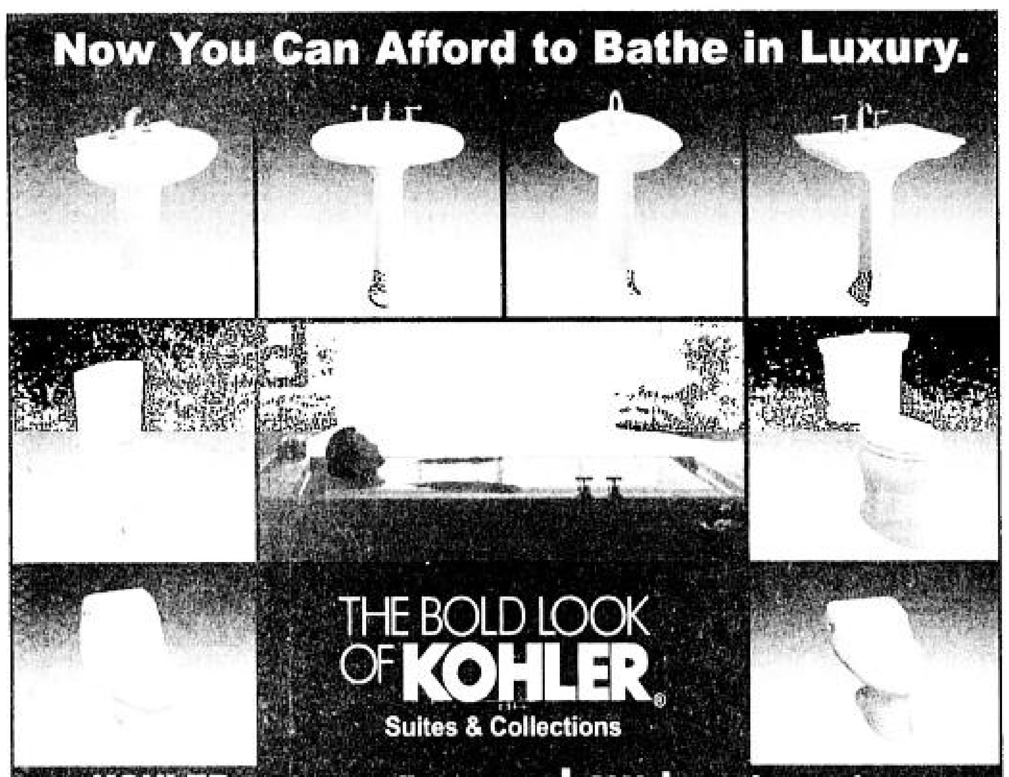

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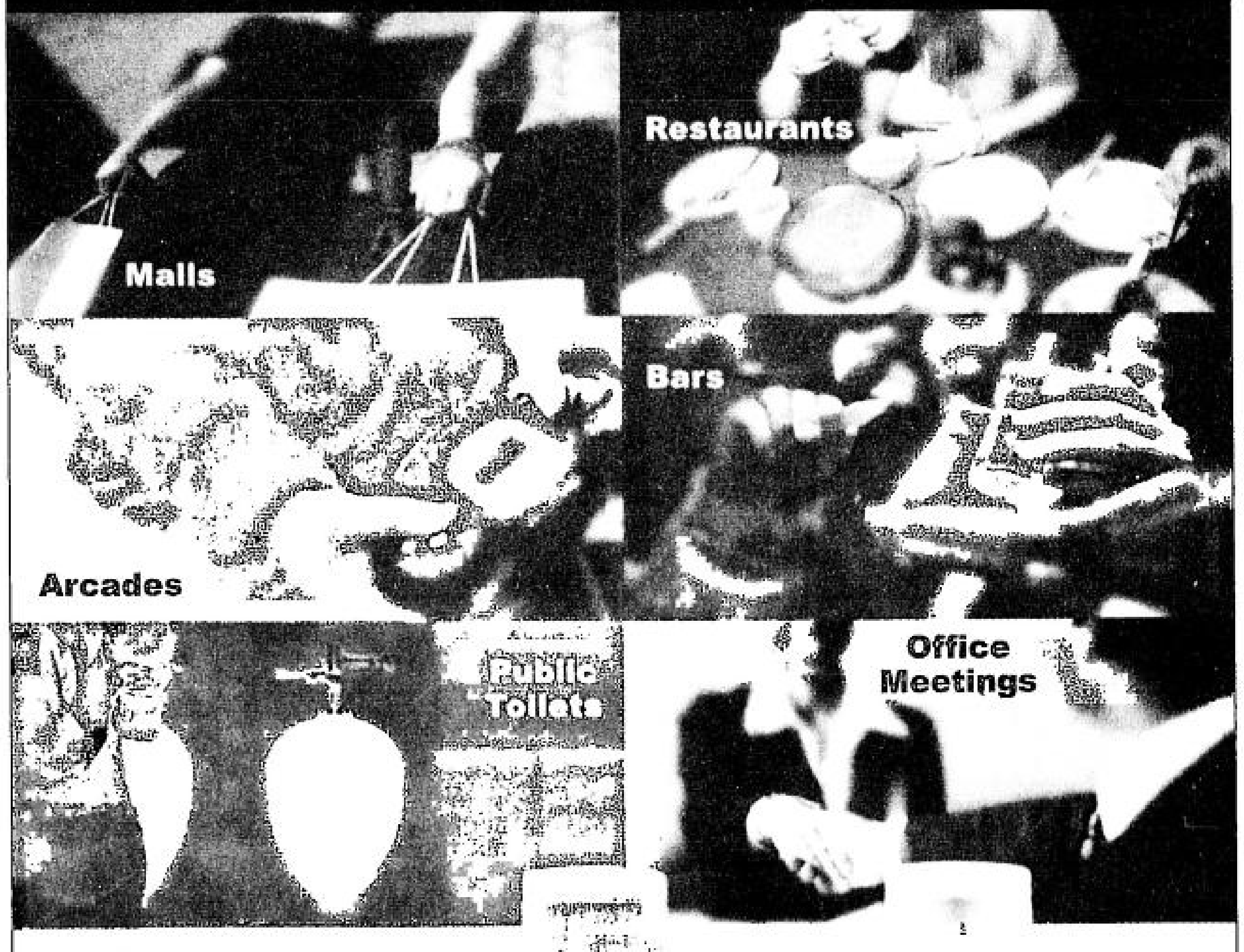

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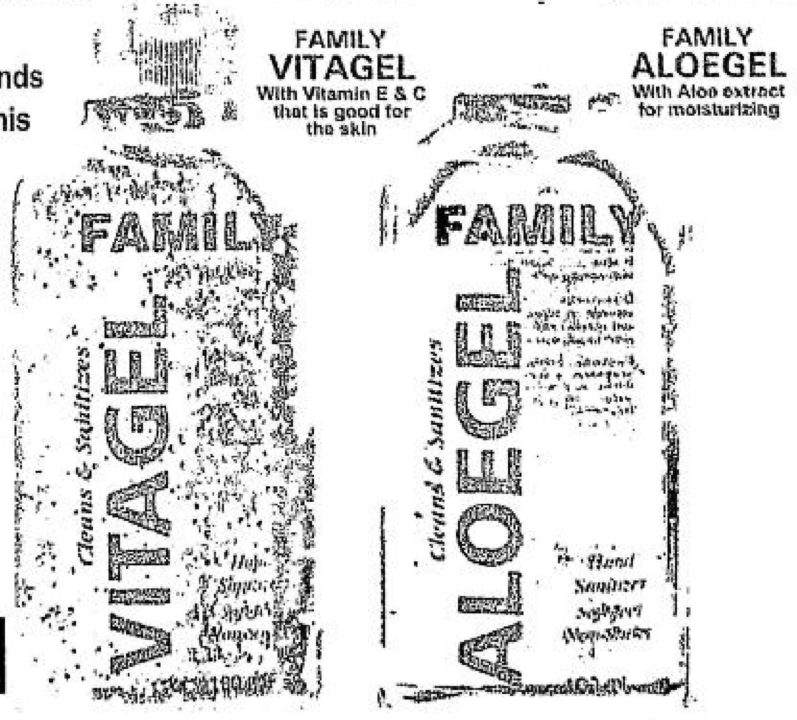

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DOH wins int'l health prize

By Armand Nocum

THE EASTERN Visayas office of the Department of Health is this year's winner of the prestigious Sasakawa Health Prize awarded by the World Health Organization and the Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation.

The DOH received the award two decades after former Health Minister Dr. Jesus Azurin became one of the Sasakawa Health Prize's first winners.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, who is in Geneva, Switzerland, accepted the award Thursday in behalf of the DOH Center for Health Development in Eastern Visayas.

The center received the award for its effective implementation of a "comprehensive health" program designed to address the basic health problems of the poor people in the region.

The program, known as the Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas Project, "consists of strengthening district health systems, upgrading local health facilities, and improving referral and health information systems," a DOH statement said.

The award was established in 1984 upon the initiative of and with funds provided by Ryoichi Sasakawa, chair of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation and president of the Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation.

"This statuette that I proudly hold in my hand will serve as a constant reminder of the nobility of our cause and an inspiration for greater service for the health of all our people," Dayrit said in his acceptance speech.

He promised to put the cash prize to good use among the poor sector of Philippine society that remains in need of basic health services.

RP mulls deployment ban on OFWs to SARS-hit nations

By Blanche S. Rivera

NOW that the Philippines has been stricken off the World Health Organization's list of SARS-affected countries, the government is mulling a deployment ban of overseas Filipino workers to nations hit hard by the killer disease.

Libya meanwhile has informed the Philippines it was partially lifting a ban on OFWs.

Filipinos working at the Western Jamahiriya Gas Projects would no longer be banned from entering the African country, according to a diplomatic note from the Libyan embassy.

But the ban stays for other Filipino workers wishing to enter Libya.

Tripoli last month indefinitely suspended hiring Filipino contract workers over fears it could be hit by SARS.

Labor and health officials met yesterday afternoon to discuss whether to suspend sending OFWs to Taiwan and other areas severely affected by SARS.

"There are some countries that have (banned) us . . . but they have their own problems with SARS. I think that for the health and safety of our workers, we'll have to take a close look at this," Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said in an interview during the 24th National Conference of Employers in Makati City.

Sto. Tomas met with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration board and Department of Health officials "to assess certain risk factors" involved in deploying OFWs to SARS-hit countries.

Sto. Tomas said the Taiwan Economic Cultural Office (Teco) has asked the Philippine government what it could do to allay fears of Taiwan-bound OFWs.

Taiwan had imposed a ban on OFWs when the Philippines was placed on the WHO's SARS list. It lifted the ban after the WHO delisted the Philippines.

Sto. Tomas said the Philippines wants Taiwan to agree to an arrangement similar to that made with the Singapore government.

Singapore had offered to shoulder the cost of the hospitalization of Filipino workers who should acquire SARS in their line of work. The Singapore government would also give hospitalized SARS patients an allowance equivalent to their wages.

The Teco has not yet responded to the government's request.

Sto. Tomas said that "maybe" the government would ban OFW deployment to Taiwan until the latter could give an assurance that it had set up measures against SARS infection.

Taiwan hosts around 100,000 OFWs, most of them employed as domestic helpers, caregivers and factory workers.

Cyprus, Lebanon and Turkey have not yet lifted their ban on OFWs. *With AFP*

Cops seek tighter check on Indons

OFFICIALS of the Philippine National Police yesterday proposed to immigration authorities that they crack down on Indonesians carrying Philippine passports in Davao City, to screen out would-be terrorists.

Citing intelligence information, Deputy Director General Virtus Gil, deputy chief for operations, said some Indonesians carrying false travel papers managed to enter Davao City due to lax immigration inspections there.

"The immigration bureau should conduct a crackdown there," he said, pointing out that the bomb used in the March 4 Davao City airport blast that killed 18 people had been assembled by an Indonesian.

"That's the testimony of a suspect in the blast. If the bomb-maker was an Indonesian, it's safe to say the trainers in bomb-making could be Indonesians," said Gil, commander of the Task Force for northeastern Mindanao.

Gil also confirmed reports that a team of policemen from North Sulawesi, headed by Brig. Gen. Jon Lalo, arrived in Davao City Thursday to hold talks with local police on how to improve their cooperation against terrorism.

"It's a police to police coordination. They can exchange notes on areas where they can cooperate," he said.

Over the past few years, members of the militant group Jemaah Islamiah have reportedly used the country's southern backdoor to reach the camps of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front where they trained separatist rebels, according to intelligence reports.

Indonesian Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, a self-confessed JI member, had admitted visiting MILF camps in Mindanao before he was arrested in Manila in January 2002 in connection with the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila that killed 18 people.

Al-Ghozi is serving a 12-year jail term for illegal possession of explosives and firearms.

Meanwhile, a reliable source said Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has dismissed 500 Muslim employees at the Davao airport and Sasa Wharf for not condemning the bombings. *TJ Burgonio*

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Herbert A. Recato

1st Place - Quiz (Individual Category)
Jefferson R. Caronan

2nd Place - Quiz (Individual Category)
Paulo Frederick R. Cadungon

3rd Place - Quiz (Individual Category)
Herbert A. Recato

1st Place - Mixed Media Rendering Competition
Paulo Frederick R. Cadungon

2nd Place - Design Competition
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Jenalin Pelovello
Jose Bautista, Jr.
Reynaldo Villones

7th United Architects of the Philippines Student Auxiliary (UAPSA) National Student Congress
Quiz and Architectural Design Competition held at Fontana Leisure Park, Clark Field, Pampanga on April 7-9,2003

QUIZ CHAMPION
Herbert A. Recato
Jefferson R. Caronan
Menard L. Rendora

2nd Place - Architectural Design & Rendering
Larry Gayundato

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Ernesto Talabucon, Jr.
Elmer Evangelista

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Leif Syril Pagunsan
Roderick Topacio

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Broken promise proves Strunk flight risk–DOJ

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE officials will use Strunk's promise to return to the Philippines against him when they press their case for his extradition before a US court.

State prosecutor Mark E. Jalandoni said the Department of Justice will give US officials Strunk's own letter, which was signed by his lawyers, where he signified his intention to return to the country to face investigation in the murder of his wife, actress Nida Blanca.

Jalandoni said the letter proved that Strunk was a "flight risk" since he promised to return to the Philippines but did not. Strunk is in the Sacramento County Jail in California awaiting a bail hearing in connection with his extradition trial.

Strunk's lawyers had sent the letter to National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco after the suspect left for the US to see his ailing mother in California.

His mother died but Strunk refused to return to the Philippines after he was charged with Blanca's killing, saying he did not expect to get justice in the country.

Jalandoni said the government has a strong case against Strunk.

Sworn statements

Aside from the letter, the DOJ said it will also give US officials the sworn statements of witnesses Rosalinda Molina, Pedro Pates and Leonilo Gonzaga.

Molina is the administrator of the Atlanta Center building in San Juan, where Blanca's body was found on Nov. 7, 2001.

Jalandoni said Molina saw suspect Philip Medel in the building on the day Blanca's body was discovered in her car in the building's parking garage.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group arrested Medel, who confessed to killing Blanca and implicated Strunk as the mastermind. Medel later recanted his confession, however, saying he had been tortured by the police into admitting the crime.

Pates, an acquaintance of Medel's, allegedly heard the suspect talking to Strunk over the phone on Oct. 25, 2001.

'Rod, don't worry...'

"Hi, Rod, don't worry. Don't worry. Time will come... ya... ya...," Medel told Strunk over the phone, according to Pates.

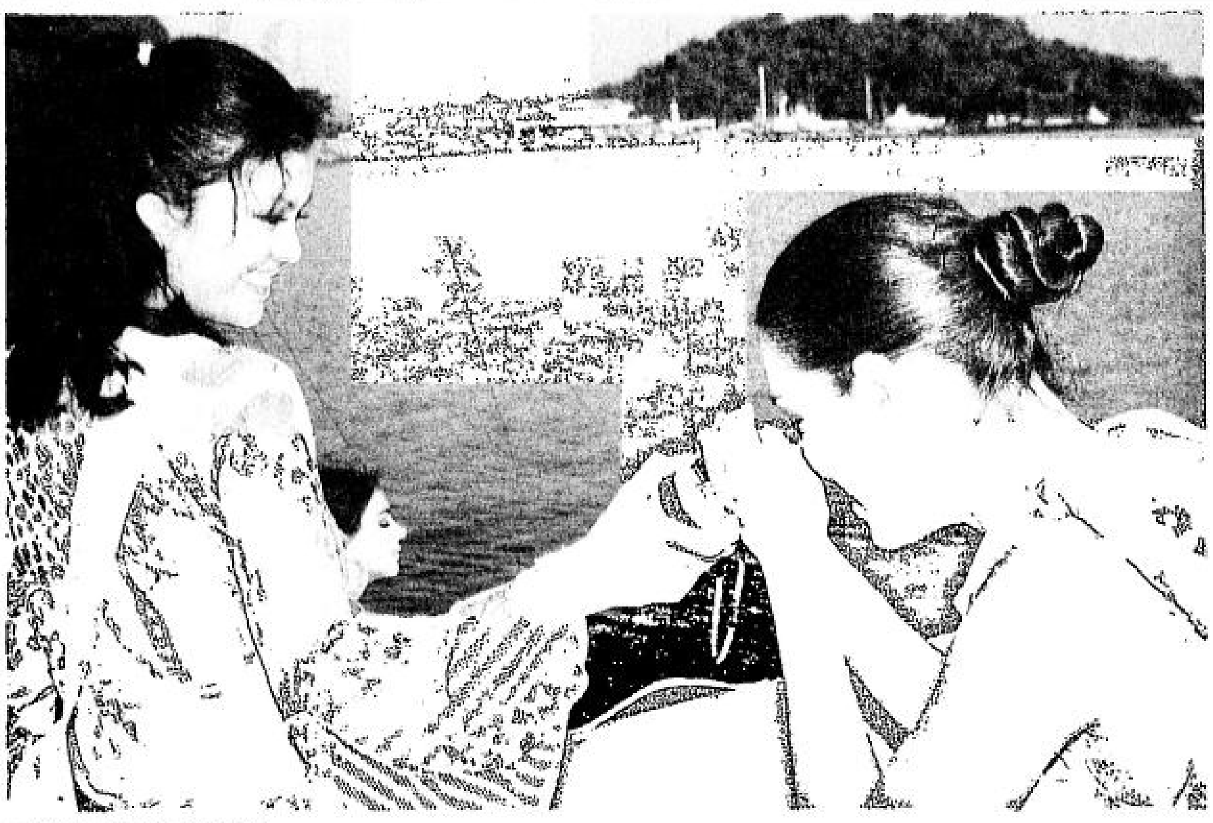
Gonzaga, also a friend of Medel's, told investigators the suspect had told him he had killed Blanca.

"We are on track," said Jalandoni, adding that American authorities have given Philippine officials 60 days to transmit their evidence against Strunk.

US marshals arrested Strunk on May 13 at a house he shared with his sister in Tracy, some 50 miles east of San Francisco in California, after the Philippines asked for his extradition.

Strunk, Medel and two unidentified persons have been charged before the Pasig City Regional Trial Court with Blanca's murder.

US magistrate Gregory Hollows is set to decide next week if Strunk should be granted bail while his extradition trial is ongoing.



EYES FOR BEAUTY

Miss Philippines Carla Gay Balingit (left) shows Miss Ecuador Andrea Marcela J. Ruiz a picture she just took at the Miraflores Locks in Panama during activities surrounding the Miss Universe 2003 competition. The 52nd edition of the beauty contest will be broadcast on June 3 from the Panama Canal Village Convention Center in Panama City. AFP

Earthquakes hit Masbate, Visayas

AN EARTHQUAKE measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale hit Masbate on Friday but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties, the government said.

The quake struck at around 10:24 a.m. with the epicenter plotted on the southern end of Masbate, about 430 km southeast of Manila, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

The quake also shook areas in Cebu and Tacloban City, as well as in Masbate, Albay and Sorsogon.

Anther earthquake hit parts of Samar and Leyte nine hours earlier. Phivolcs recorded this tremor at 1:45 a.m.

There were no reports of casualties or damage in both quakes.

Engineer Ronie Tabanlar, Phivolcs seismologist, said the two tremors were not connected although both were tectonic in origin.

Local fault

The quake in Samar and Leyte was caused by a local fault while a movement in the Philippine fault zone along the Masbate segment triggered the second quake.

Phivolcs said the first quake had a magnitude of 4.9 on the Richter scale. Its epicenter was located 11.3 degree north latitude, 125.4 degree east longitude and 33-km south east of Borongan, Eastern Samar.

The second quake had a magnitude of 5.7 on the Richter scale with the epicenter at 11.8 degrees north, 124.0 degrees east, 67 km south and 67 degrees west of Calbayog City.

The tremor was hardly felt in Metro Cebu although it was stronger in other areas.

It was recorded at Intensity 4 in Masbate, Masbate, and Intensity 3 in Tacloban and Legazpi City.

The tremor in Bulusan, Sorsogon, Metro Cebu and Roxas City, was felt at Intensity 2.

Ismael Narag, supervising research specialist at Philvolcs, said the Masbate tremor was actually an aftershock of the Feb. 15 earthquake that hit the province with a magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale (Intensity 6).

"The plates are still adjusting so we should expect aftershocks in Masbate once in a while," Narag told Inquirer.

He said the tremors felt in Borongan, Samar and Leyte were related to the subjugation of the Philippine sea plate. Aftershocks were expected, he said.*Gerald G. Lacuarta in Manila, Joey A. Gabieta and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau; AFP*

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Serge seeks cancellation of 'onerous' power deal

By Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III yesterday urged the government to nullify its contract with the CE Casecnan Water and Energy Company Inc. (Casecnan), one of five independent power producer deals found onerous by the IPP Review Committee.

Osmeña said the Casecnan contract was similar to the contract of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. to build Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, which was recently nullified by the Supreme Court.

He said the Casecnan contract was "fast-tracked" during the administration of President Fidel Ramos.

Osmeña made the call as the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo resumed its hearing on the status and operations of the contract signed by the government and Casecnan in 1994.

A consortium including the United States-based California Energy International Ltd. manages the Casecnan Multipurpose Project, which is required to supply electricity to the Luzon grid and provide irrigation to hectares of farmlands in Eastern Luzon through the Pantabangan Dam.

"We should declare the contract null and void," Osmeña told reporters after the hearing that took almost four hours.

At the hearing, Arroyo asked Roberto Sebastian, Ramos' agriculture secretary, whether the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), a Cabinet-level body assigned to evaluate and approve build-operate-transfer contracts, had approved the Casecnan deal.

Sebastian said he would look into the matter and provide the pertinent papers.

But Arroyo later told reporters that an initial check done by his committee showed "no record of ICC approval" for the Casecnan contract.

Osmeña also raised the high cost of providing water to farmlands under the Casecnan project.

Citing the testimony of National Irrigation Authority officials, Osmeña said it costs P1 million to irrigate a one-hectare farmland, including P171,000 to build a canal for water distribution.

"I can buy a one-hectare farmland for P100,000 and it will cost me P171,000 to irrigate it," he said at one point in the hearing.

Talking with reporters later, Arroyo agreed that the Casecnan project appeared to be "a very expensive [one]."

He said his committee would next focus on the status of the power operations of the Casecnan project, and noted that it had the highest purchased power agreement rates in the country.

The Blue Ribbon Committee began looking into the Casecnan project after Sen. Rodolfo Biazon delivered a privileged speech last year saying that the government would be paying Casecnan P4 billion a year for the next 20 years.

And yet, Biazon said, the consortium was unable to provide the water and electricity required.

Consumer groups under the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) pressed the government to cancel onerous IPP contracts beginning immediately with that involving Casecnan.

The FDC's Ana Maria Nemenzo said the Supreme Court decision nullifying the Piatco contract had set a "very welcome precedent for other onerous government projects, especially in the power industry."

"The government cannot do any less [with regard] to the Casecnan contract," she said.

The FDC urged Senators Arroyo, Osmeña and Biazon to take the lead in calling for the cancellation of the Casecnan contract.

Nemenzo said the contract was grossly overpriced and given a direct guarantee under the auspices of the Ramos administration.

The Supreme Court had ruled that the direct government guarantee given to Piatco was against public policy and prohibited under the amended BOT Law. *With a report from Gerald G. Lacuarta*

THANKS FOR THE VOTE

President Macapagal-Arroyo receives an award from lawyer Rene Pascual, Integrated Bar of the Philippines San Francisco chapter president, for the passage of the Absentee Voting Law, which allows Filipinos abroad to vote in Philippine national elections. Looking on behind are, from left, San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and two unidentified guests.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Let's test Bt corn, urges ex-Science exec

A FORMER secretary of the Department of Science and Technology has urged that independent tests be performed on the safety and health issues surrounding the genetically engineered (GE) Bt corn.

William Padolina, now deputy director general for partnerships of the International Rice Research Institute, said scientists should evaluate the evidence presented by the environmentalists who went on a hunger strike to protest the commercialization of Bt corn in the country. *(See related story on Page A14.)*

The hunger strikers recently ended their 29-day fast after failing to get a moratorium from the Department of Agriculture on the sale and planting of Monsanto's Yieldgard Bt corn, a GE crop that produces its own pesticide.

"Let's look at what the real conditions are. You cannot settle a scientific question by a hunger strike," Padolina said during a visit to the INQUIRER Wednesday night.

Padolina and the IRRI staff were at the INQUIRER to present the new "Rice Almanac" and the preparations for the observation of the International Year of Rice next year. The IRRI develops rice varieties also using biotechnology and genetic engineering.

Padolina said genetically modified organisms (GMOs) like Bt corn are the most regulated crops in the world.

"If they (anti-GMO groups) have new evidence, let the scientists evaluate it," he said. "You have to have an independent test."

Padolina acknowledged, however, that ultimately, "a political decision would have to be made" on the question of whether to allow GMOs to be commercially propagated in the country.

"Scientists can't do anything anymore if its a political decision," he said.

The DA last Dec. 5 approved the sale and planting of Bt corn beginning the corn planting season this month.

Anti-GMO activists staged a hunger strike last April 21 but decided to call it off on the 29th day on Wednesday after the departure of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo for the United States on May 17.

Before he left, Lorenzo informed the hunger strikers that he was not inclined to issue a moratorium until new scientific evidence was presented to prove that Bt corn posed a serious health and environmental risk. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

Danding ad a test, says Erap

TO THE "trained" political eye of deposed President Joseph Estrada, the recent Ginebra San Miguel ad featuring businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco pitching his company's product indicates the latter is weighing his chances in the 2004 presidential race.

"The commercial is an indication that he's available and thinking of running," Estrada said yesterday when asked to comment on the ad which is widely perceived as the beginning of Cojuangco's presidential campaign.

Estrada told reporters covering his Sandiganbayan trial that the opposition still considers Cojuangco among its top three bets to carry its colors, along with Sen. Panfilo Lacson and actor Fernando Poe Jr. *Volt Contreras*

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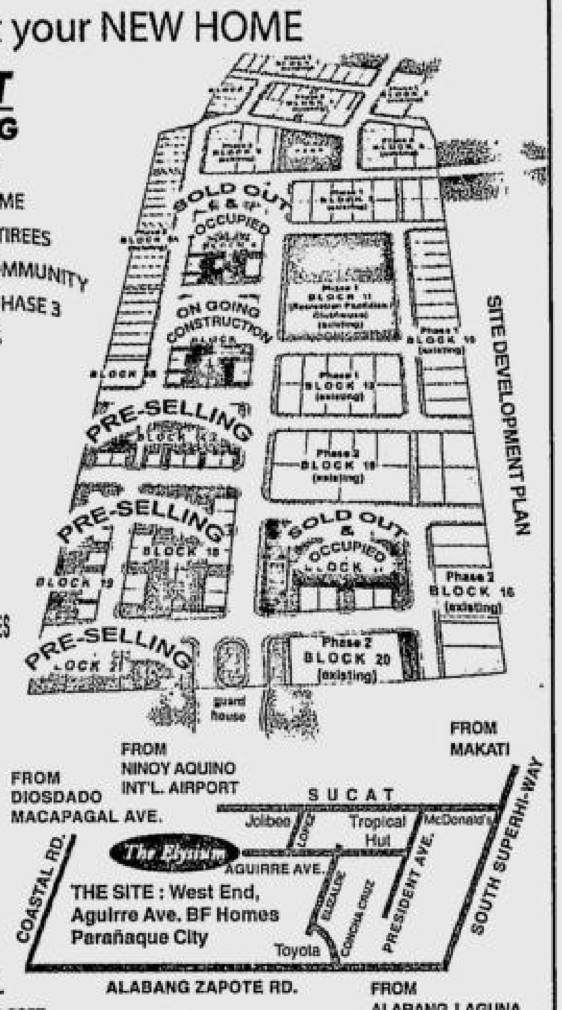

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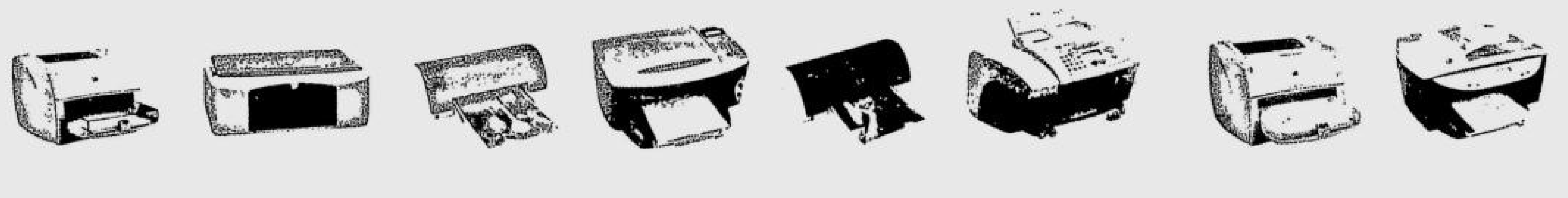
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IRRI: C. Luzon farmers produce Asia's 'greenest rice'

From page A1

ticide use, IRRI director general Ronald P. Cantrell said Central Luzon farmers were able to increase their rice yields over the same period, from an average of 2.75 tons to close to 3.25 tons per hectare by 2002.

IRRI research also showed that some farmers who had successfully reduced their insecticide use saved up to P1,000 per hectare.

"This result is testimony to the success and hard work of PhilRice and the other groups in the Philippines who over many years have been promoting the use of integrated pest management," Cantrell said.

According to IRRI, insecticide use in Central Luzon, which peaked in the mid-1980s, was now at an "historic low, though some farmers still use insecticides as a last resort to prevent serious crop loss."

The research also showed that herbicide use peaked in the early 1990s and has slowly declined since then. Farmers, however, continue to use herbicides more frequently than insecticides.

Central Luzon is composed of the provinces of Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac, Bataan, Zambales and Nueva Ecija.

Last resort

Cantrell said the "mistakes" of the Green Revolution "where too much emphasis was sometimes put on the use of chemicals for pest control—have clearly been recognized and corrected."

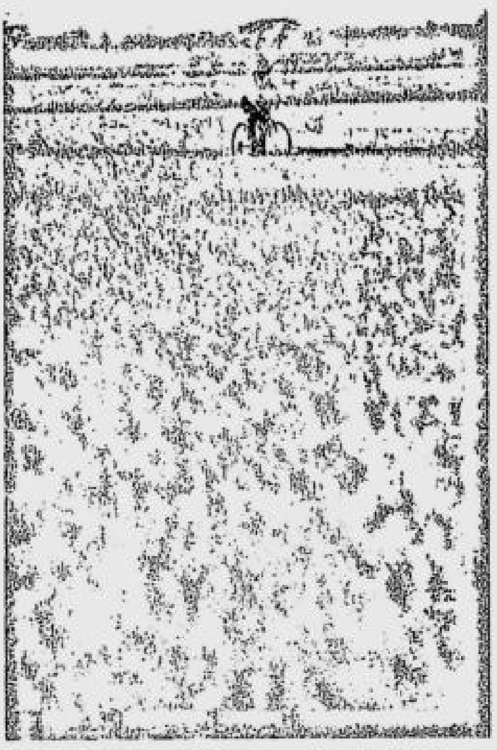
"Because of their toxicity, insecticides really should be used by farmers as a last resort, and we are very pleased to see that farmers have realized this for many years, especially here in the Philippines," Cantrell said.

Gary Jahn, an insect ecologist at IRRI, said most insecticide use on rice was a waste of the farmers' time and money because when applied at the wrong time, it had no impact on the crop's yield.

Jahn said insecticides may also be applied at the right time but in the wrong way, due to either poor application techniques, incorrect dosage or even use of the wrong chemical.

"What we hope to learn next is why the farmers of Central Luzon have learned these lessons so much more quickly than farmers elsewhere," Jahn added.

Reductions in insecticide use have been achieved in other countries, but in most cases, after a period of usage decline, farmers started to increase their use again.



HOW GREEN and clean are the ricefields of Nueva Ecija where farmers use insecticides a lot less than their counterparts in the Asian region. VAL HANDUMON

PhilRice researchers said one of the key factors continuing to influence Philippine farmers is the return of fish, frogs and edible snails to their farms, confirming the positive environmental impact of IPM strategies.

Irrigation also played an important role in the reduction of insecticide use.

"Farmers in Central Luzon are able to practice synchronous planting because water is released at the same time," said Artemio Vasallo, a PhilRice training specialist.

Vasallo explained that when all the farmers in an area plant and harvest at the same time, the post-harvest "famine" experienced by insect pests sharply slashes their populations.

"Thus, the incidence of pests is more manageable in Central Luzon than in Iloilo or some parts of Mindanao, where asynchronous planting is more prevalent," Vasallo said.

Aussie pastor jailed for abuse

From page A1

pines from May 1999 to July 2001. Gillard was arrested by Philippine authorities in May 2002 and voluntarily deported to Australia two months after.

During the sentencing yesterday, the New South Wales district court was told that Gillard had visited camps for disadvantaged children and would offer the boys food, clothing and money in return for sexual favors. According to a report earlier this month by The Australian newspaper, the prosecution had told the court that Gillard would sleep in the camp of the boys, kiss and caress them, tell them he loved them and then asked them to do sexual acts.

It was not clear where the children's camps were held but The Australian said they were run by the Evangelical Fellowship Philippines Inc.

Under Australia's child sex tourism law, Gillard could have faced a maximum 12-year sentence for each of his victims.

Wife supportive

The minister of the church where Gillard was a member had testified before the court earlier this month that Gillard was a sincere Christian dedicated to helping the less fortunate, The Australian report had said.

The court, according to The Australian, was also told at the time by Gillard's lawyer that his client's chances of rehabilitation were high because his wife was very supportive. The lawyer said Gillard had already shown remorse and had sought counseling. He said Gillard was also a victim of sexual abuse by his uncle; his mother was sent to a mental institution.

Gillard's eight-year sentence will start from the time he was first jailed in Australia in July 2002. He will be eligible for parole in 2007. *With reports from AFP*

SEC clarifies CAP story: It's interim comptroller, not receiver

From page A1

Chair Lilia R. Bautista said that the interim comptroller would report directly to the Commission "to apprise the same on the financial condition of CAP and to undertake needed measures to protect the interest of planholders."

Bautista erroneously stated in a briefing with reporters on Thursday that the SEC appointed Manabat as "interim receiver" because of the pre-need firm's failure on May 15 to infuse at least P2 billion to its trust fund.

A trust fund is money set aside to pay the future benefits of planholders.

Manabat will act as interim comptroller until the SEC appoints a permanent overseer.

BAUTISTA ERIK ARAZAS

He will also "temporarily oversee the organization's trust fund build-up, improve further the viability of CAP operations and evaluate the effectiveness of the investment program to ensure greater returns," the SEC said in a statement.

The SEC did not disclose the specific duties of Manabat but Bautista said in the Thursday briefing that the SEC accountant would make sure that CAP maintain low operating expenses and properly contribute to a separate trust fund that would cover the benefits under new pre-need plan sales.

Bautista said Manabat would also have to determine whether CAP shareholders would have to infuse more money to CAP through a JSS (joint and several signatures) agreement.

Major CAP shareholders include the Sobrepeña family, the Thomson family, Espaldon family and businessman Rafael Evangelista.

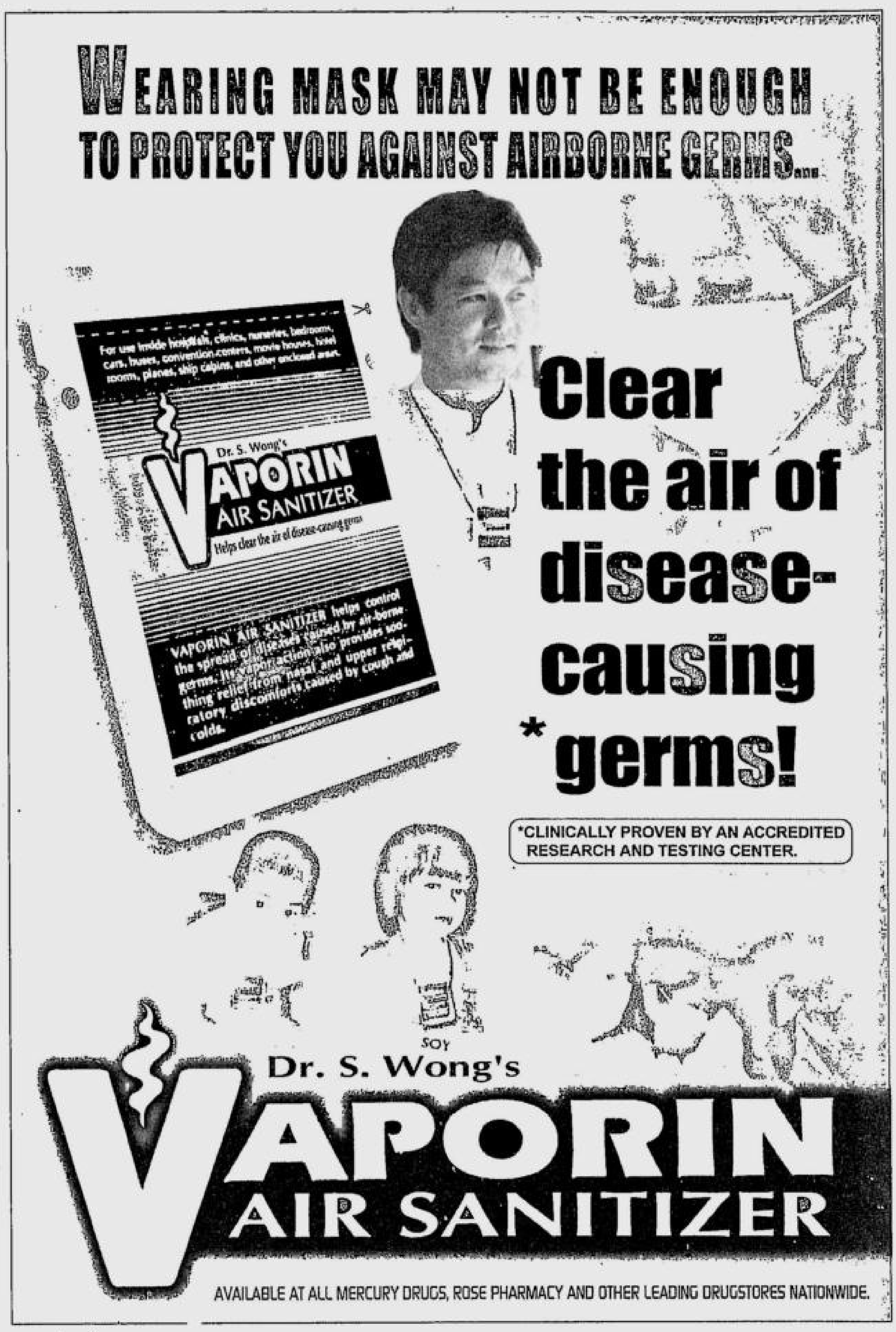
Bautista also said the SEC had problems with the actuarial valuation report (AVR) submitted by CAP, claiming that CAP's actuary Mabini Juan used a computation method that did not conform with the SEC's rules.

The AVR determines the appropriate trust fund level a pre-need company should maintain to cover future obligations. A company is required to cover for any deficiency within 30 days if the pre-need firm's trust fund falls below this level.

CAP has repeatedly pointed out that it has diligently paid all of its planholders through the years and it has not reneged on its commitments.

Bautista also disclosed that a group led by former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo was packaging a financial program to allow pre-need companies to cover for trust fund deficiencies.

Under De Ocampo's proposal, multilateral agencies such as the International Finance Corp. and Asian Development Bank would open up credit lines to pre-need companies.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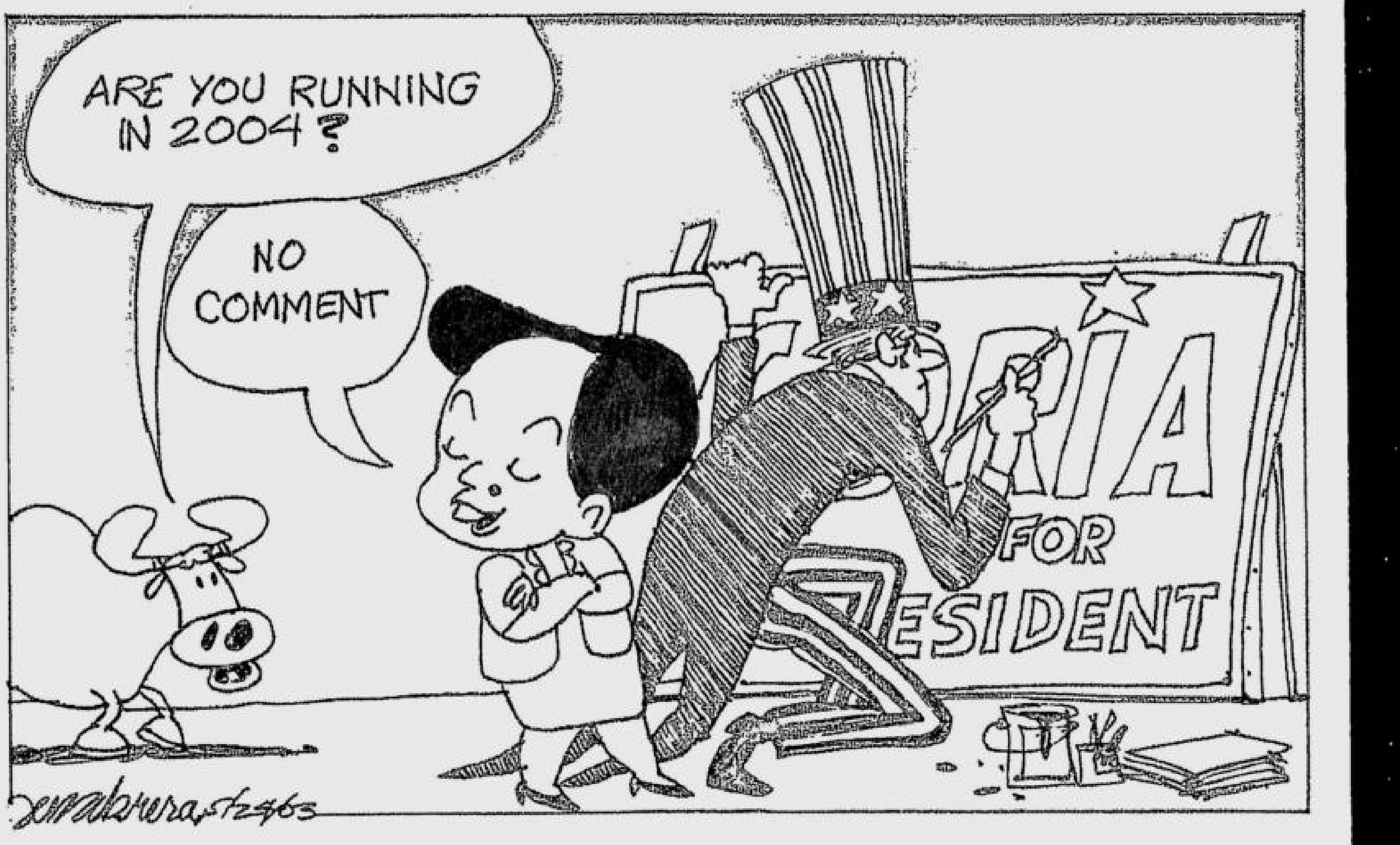

Scent of success

EDITORIAL

WHETHER President Macapagal-Arroyo likes it or not, her successful state visit to the United States has become politicized. The $4.09 billion "RP-US Strategic Alliance Package" she received from US President George W. Bush and her warm rapport with Bush are the stuff that rekindled speculations that she might reconsider her Dec. 30 decision not to seek a full six-year term.

Without exception, all Filipino presidents who visited the United States and who received windfalls (read: aid) from the visit came home to enhanced public opinion ratings. More so perhaps in the case of Ms Macapagal whose visit linked the Philippines to a new strategic security framework forged by the US-led war on terrorism.

The President was annoyed that the press gave a domestic political meaning to the visit that resulted in the Philippines being elevated to the status of a "non-Nato ally," giving the country a foot inside the door to US military assistance in the event of emergencies related to the US-led war against terrorism. She tried to squelch speculations about her plans for 2004 in a press conference in which she chided journalists for being "fixated" on politics. She emphatically restated the agenda of the visit. "I want to define the agenda of the press conference," she said. "It's about the gains of the state visit. It's not about the politics. I did not sacrifice my political [life] just to accommodate all your curiosity about politics."

In more categorical terms, the President said, "You know I feel so comfortable not being a candidate for president. I'd been able to make so many unpopular but correct decisions and so I think I should stick to that decision."

As to what she is going to do with the assets she has received from Washington, the President said: "My focus is on what I need to do in the next 14 months. And if you're fixated on that, I'm not going to feed your insatiable appetite for the wrong issues."

With so much resources at her disposal, there's much to do to turn things around in the homeland, but the reprimand she addressed to the press might as well have been channeled to her political allies who are fanning the speculation as well as actually urging her to reconsider her decision. The scent of success is strong, and many of her supporters who had written her off as a loser are now among the most vocal in doubting her determination to stick to her decision. They cannot accept her categorical disavowal in the United States.

When the President is back home and she begins to translate her new assets into concrete projects focused on security and economic reconstruction in conflict zones, especially Mindanao, she will find that her political constituents will not leave her alone to do things without politics in mind. As she regains her popularity and public confidence and as she delivers results, the clamor from her supporters to break her promise will become even louder.

Even while she was still in Washington, some of her allies in Congress were already raising the theme of continuity in governance. The argument goes this way: Since the President and Bush have developed a strong chemistry that unlocked the doors of American aid, within the rubric of the evolving security relationship based on the war on terrorism, it would be best to keep the relationship going after 2004. As she pushes her agenda of leaving a legacy of a "strong republic," the more she will hear this kind of arguments pouring into her ears.

The reality is that the bigger and more distorting source of "fixation" in politics is not the press. The source is the importunings of her political allies and new-found supporters who have seen in her successful US visit a resurrection of her political fortunes.

But in the next few months, the President should focus on translating the assets flowing from her visit into a concrete agenda of national revitalization and reconstruction. Results will determine political realignments by December—not the self-serving whispers or clamor of her camp followers.

Reader reactions

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I RECEIVED a nice letter from Sr. M. Consilio Napi, OSB, principal of St. Agnes Academy, mildly chiding me for relying on "unfortunate bad reporting," as she calls it, that I commented on in this column of March 9, 2003. She also reminded me—unnecessarily, if I may say so—of some lessons on journalism I should remember.

The item in question, which was published in the "ear" of the front page of the INQUIRER on that date, said that St. Agnes Academy had banned debates on the ground that they were "anti-peace" and would only create "tension and rivalry." Principal Napi was even directly quoted in the report. If I relied on that news item, it was because I assumed it had been verified before it was published so prominently. Perhaps this is a matter for our Ombudsman Raul J. Palabrica to look into, principally to hear the side of the provincial correspondent who sent it.

The reason I wrote against that reported policy was not merely to criticize St. Agnes Academy but, more importantly, my fear that freedom of expression might have been suppressed and discouraged in that school. As I said in that column, the news item "rang alarm bells to this paranoid observer" who has been a consistent defender of what is rightly called "the instrument and the guaranty and the bright consummate flower of all liberty."

As a member of the Supreme Court, I was always quick to resist any attempt to muzzle freedom of expression. I wrote the dissenting opinion in the case of National Press Club v. Commission on Elections, where the majority sustained the ban on political advertisements even if it was violative of the people's right to know about the candidates and their platforms. Congress later reversed the prohibition and thereby restored a freer flow of information on the election issues.

At any rate, pending clarification by the correspondent of this misunderstanding, I am happy that St. Agnes Academy has denied having banned debates and in fact conducts a course on Argumentation and Debate in its third year. It has also joined several academic and sports competitions that negate Sister Napi's alleged opinion that these are "anti-peace." The evidence she has submitted so far shows that the school does not discourage wholesome activities even if they promote tension and rivalry. That reporter may have misinterpreted the facts, but we should hear him just the same in the interest of due process.

From far off Germany comes a respectful disapproval of my recent article on "Homosexuals and Vulgarity," (March 12, 2003), I received a number of telephone calls agreeing with my views and sharing my outrage over the way many homosexuals act to the detriment of their more respectable brethren. I also deplored the practice of our entertainment industry of exploiting their effeminate antics for allegedly comic effect that only serves to caricature homosexuals in general as deserving only of public contempt.

Rafael S. Buemia, who describes himself as gay, does not seem to be aware of what is happening in this country. The acts of many homosexuals here are scandalous, and the movies and television are cashing in on their antics to the delight of the tasteless *bakya* class. I am sure he does not share their disgraceful conduct although he stoutly defends it and says they are entitled, as unabashed exhibitionists and parodies of their ambiguous sex, to their dignity. Dignity? Mr. Buemia should come home and see for himself how these ridiculous people are robbing the respectable homosexuals, who lead proper and even exemplary lives, of the dignity that they—and only they—deserve.

My next reaction is to a gentle man (two words) who was much bothered to read that I stopped hearing Mass after I left the church one Sunday morning because I could no longer bear the oppressive homily being interminably delivered by a priest as his parishioners sweltered in the summer heat. I thought it was most un-Christian for that bore to belabor his flock with his sanctimonious monotony, and so I left. I resolved thereafter that I did not have to go to church as penance for my sins but could pray by myself alone as Jesus had advised when he said: "But when you pray, go to your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you." (Matthew, 6:5)

I sincerely thank Jose F. Flor, who describes himself as my "brother in Christ," for his concern for my eternal salvation. I assure him that I have not lost my faith in God, and never will, and that the conduct of one priest—and of many other priests—can never rock that faith. There are many ways of praying, like singing a song of praise or writing a perfect poem or consoling a tortured soul. Mine is communing with God in the solitude of my own room, where we can converse privately without the pomp and ceremony of communal worship and demonstrative piety.

So there. Once again I may have offended sensitive beliefs and touched raw nerves. In doing so, I have not meant to be derisive or superior but only to express my views in what I still believe to be a free society. In that society, the individual does not speak in timorous whispers or with bated breath but openly and frankly with the clear voice of the unafraid.

Back to 'urong-sulong'?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

EARLIER this week, an acquaintance asked me whether I would like to bet on whether Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's name would be included in the presidential polls (both election and opinion surveys) next year. He was betting—in fact he was absolutely certain—that she would.

Since, up to that point, I had been of the opinion that the President meant what she said last Dec. 30, when she quite unexpectedly announced her withdrawal from the presidential race in 2004, I took him up on the bet. Since I consider myself risk-averse, my staking a sky-is-the-limit dinner meant that I was pretty sure of the outcome.

What was the basis of my certainty? Well, I had the opportunity to talk to her both on and off camera the night of her fateful announcement. Her sincerity at the time was obvious, and the relief she felt at no longer having to constantly dance to the tune of those who represented potential votes was almost palpable. She and her husband Mike gave examples (off camera) of the kind of political blackmail she was being subjected to by politicians who were shamelessly exploiting her desire for another term.

Moreover, although her decision was sudden, it was not done on the spur of the moment, but rather after almost 10 months of self-examination. That her husband fully supported her decision (although he was not consulted, but was apprised after the fact) only reinforced its finality.

Sure enough, the dismaying *urong-sulong* habit that characterized her pre-Dec. 30 actions, which may have developed because the initial desire to do what was right was more often than not overcome by the desire to do what was apparently popular, soon showed signs of disappearing. Thus, at the height of the raging controversy over the Philippine stand on the US-Iraq war, Ms Macapagal remained staunch in her overt support of the United States (the "Coalition of the Willing") in the face of cautionary or critical statements from political leaders from both sides of the fence (and deafening silence from the presidential wannabes who probably thought that discretion was the better part of valor). And, again in a television interview at the time, she proudly pointed out that her withdrawal from next year's presidential race allowed her to do what she thought was right for the Filipino people—and getting into a "damn-the-torpedoes-full-speed-ahead" mode, so to speak.

Ironically, her total indifference to possible political fallout or backlash when making decisions seems to have raised rather than lowered her stock with the Filipino people. The turnaround in her poll ratings indicates that like people everywhere else, Filipinos appreciate a principled stance, even if they may disagree with it. And of course, her unwavering support for George W. Bush when it was unpopular to do so has so far paid off in spades for the Philippines. Filipinos know it, and grudgingly or not, appreciate it (although, alas, one doesn't really know whether the principled stance would still be appreciated if she bet on the wrong horse).

Which is also ironically why the possibility of Ms Macapagal changing her mind and running in 2004 has become the hottest issue in town. And why there is a clear and present danger that I may lose my bet after all.

On hindsight, I now realize that the person I made the bet with is in the public relations field, a fact which I failed to consider when I took his bet. Maybe he knew something that I didn't know, such as, perhaps, that the President's handlers may have revived their activities in the PR area, which had slowed down to practically nothing after her Dec. 30 announcement. It wouldn't take much to put two and two together if all of a sudden presidential image-building became a priority once again.

Then there is another tidbit from the grapevine: Malacañang pollsters are active again. The scuttlebutt is that the recent Lakas poll on charter change (where very questionable results seem to indicate that the majority of Filipinos are in favor) was paid for by Malacañang. Cynical, if not malicious, minds conclude that the No-El option (no elections, which would mean the President stays in office another three years) is very much on the front burner—which further means that the President's handlers are keeping all options open.

But losing that bet is really the least of my worries. What must be of the greatest concern is that if the President is considering running again, the damn-the-torpedoes-full-speed-ahead mode will be replaced once again by the how-does-this-move-translate-into-votes mode of decision-making. Decisiveness will be replaced by indecisiveness. The President's gut instincts will be subordinated to the advice of her handlers.

It must be understood that there is nothing inherently wrong with GMA changing her mind; President Cory Aquino was the only one who kept her word, and she was not really a politician. But Ms Macapagal's decision must be predicated on a real, as opposed to a manipulated, public clamor.

The bottom line is that if she wants to keep her job longer, she must ignore her handlers. She must do what she thinks is right, not what she thinks is popular. And even if she is not reelected, she will at least leave a great legacy behind. A win-win situation: She wins, and the Philippines wins. One for the country.

Let's push Mindanao

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE OFFER of large funds from the United States to develop Muslim Mindanao in order to stop the violence has given the drive to bring peace and prosperity to the seething island tremendous new impetus. One can feel a big surge of optimism in the air, and all of us who have long despaired about how the conflict could be resolved ought to take advantage of it and push toward peace.

* * *

I'm thinking particularly of the MILF as the common target of moral suasion. I submit that the Catholic and Protestant bishops and the Muslim ulamas; the politicians who have influence in Mindanao, such as Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Senators Nene Pimentel and Robert Barbers; the 50 House members from Mindanao who recently contributed P5 million each from their CDFs for a Mindanao fund; all the NGOs working there, such as the Mindanao Commission on Women; the media and the public at large ought to do everything in their capacity to rally the MILF. Presidential adviser on the peace process Eduardo Ermita, in a recent letter to Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, listed among the steps that the government has put into place even before the bombings the "engagement by the President and other senior officials in a series of dialogues with Muslim leaders and stakeholders."

Let's join our voices in an appeal to the MILF to stop all violence and abandon its secessionist tendencies and negotiate how it can become a significant partner of government in bringing about peace and development. If it doesn't come around, it would be a big propaganda disaster for the MILF.

* * *

At his joint press conference with President Macapagal-Arroyo at the White House, US President Bush pointedly called on the MILF "to abandon the path of violence" and promised that if it seeks redress for its grievances through negotiations, the US will provide "diplomatic and financial support to a renewed peace process." This was also stressed in the two leaders' joint communiqué. GMA has termed the initial $30 million US funding, part of the $100 million financial package to develop the strife-torn areas of Mindanao, the "dividend of peace." To emphasize its key role as the "culmination" of her US trip, GMA has scheduled an extended stay in Mindanao early next month to personally assess security conditions and supervise the implementation of development programs. Such a hands-on supervision is needed to ensure that every centavo is well utilized. We ought to learn from our bitter experiences with past "development" programs.

* * *

GMA is upset over the renewed "fixation" of the media and the politicians on the possibility of her running in 2004 which could divert attention away from the many gains of her US trip and take the focus away from her consuming interest: what she could do in the next 14 months to bring peace and prosperity to Mindanao. Her frustration is understandable, but I think that two issues are intertwined. If GMA succeeds in putting Mindanao peace and development on track, the clamor for her to run will come not just from Lakas but also from the public.

* * *

The observation of presidential adviser on overseas Filipino communities Heherson Alvarez that seven or eight out of every 10 Filipinos he met in the US wanted GMA to run is not surprising. The Fil-Ams were mightily impressed by GMA's rapport with Bush. Moreover, since they realize that he would probably be reelected in November 2004, given the strong support he is getting from the American people, the Fil-Ams want a Filipino leader with access to him. A signature campaign to persuade GMA is going on in the US.

* * *

Ilocos Rep. Imee Marcos told a media forum that she has documents signed by Secretary Eduardo Ermita showing that the government staged the bombings in Mindanao in order to create chaos, perhaps preparatory to declaring martial rule or to get Uncle Sam's support. Ermita denied it outright. The idea is preposterous. It seems like Imee has a bad hangover from her father's martial rule, when many things were stage-managed.

One such episode involved the "Magic 8" MNLF commanders from Sulu who surrendered to the government in the late 1970s and were brought to Manila Bay aboard an LST. Upon docking, the boat was quickly fixed up with appropriate foliage to look like an island in Mindanao. Then Marcos and his officials rode out in a PCF from Malacañang to board it. Next day the news said FM traveled to Jolo to accept the surrender! There was also talk then that the bombings in Metro Manila in the early 1980s were done by some military elements to lay the basis for Proclamation 1081.

* * *

Speaker Jose de Venecia and his wife Gina have their own fair share of stories to recount about the US trip. The President introduced Gina to Bush as the godmother of two of her children, whereupon he embraced Gina and bussed her. Friends are now teasing her not to take a bath.

During their meeting at the Oval Office, GMA spoke to Bush about the idea of their jointly sponsoring an "Interreligious Council of the UN." Since it was De Venecia's idea, she asked him to explain it. That was the opening the great House salesman needed, and he proceeded to tell Bush in the presence of his key officials: "As a warrior president you won in Afghanistan and Iraq. But now you must be a leader of reconciliation and peace who should strive to breach the 'great divide' between the Christians and other faiths, and the Muslims on the other hand." Bush was all ears as JDV expounded on his "global proposal" that could unite not only the world but also various elements in the US now reflecting the divisions in the world. At the end of JDV's discourse, Bush said, "That's a great idea, Mr. Speaker." (Next: the Interreligious Council)

A tissue of lies

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I MUST confess that I had second thoughts about writing anything about the most recent journalistic controversy: a reporter for The New York Times had, over almost four years of working for the paper, "committed frequent acts of journalistic fraud while covering significant news events," as the Times investigation puts it.

If Jayson Blair, 27, had been reporting for another paper, perhaps his transgressions would not have merited global attention. But he was a reporter for The New York Times, a 152-year-old institution that has set the benchmarks for our profession and has become America's "newspaper of record." His history of faking details and interviews, as well as lifting outright from the works of competitors is thus all the more astonishing for its daring, if not arrogance. And the incident undoubtedly is a "huge black eye" for the paper, as Times chair Arthur Sulzberger Jr. remarked.

The reason any journalist would hesitate to comment on the Blair case is that any hint of self-righteousness is apt to invite scrutiny of one's own record. And, being only human after all, a reporter, editor or columnist is likely to have committed a mistake or two—or more—in the course of a career. Anyone so inclined is apt to dig up some dirt, and that's why tut-tutting over Blair and his abysmal record is so risky.

But then, as so many of our readers point out, journalists are so eager to expose the foibles of government officials, celebrities and even hapless "no-names" while being extremely thin-skinned about having our own weaknesses exposed. So, what the heck, let's proceed.

* * *

SOME American commentators have laid the blame for the scandal squarely on the pursuit of "diversity" in the Times newsroom. Blair, an African-American, would not have lasted as long as he did if his editors had not been so willing to cut him some slack because of his race, they say. Blair was thus able to get away with more mistakes than if he were, say, white.

Hogwash, say other, mostly black, journalists. If "diversity" were such a powerful motivation for hiring and keeping reporters, then the paper would have more minority reporters than it does today. White colleagues of Blair's also racked up worse records for errors and inaccuracy, and they, too got away with it. Why isn't race a factor in their case?

Described as aggressive and ambitious, with a talent for schmoozing superiors, Blair may have survived as long as he did at the Times not so much because of his race as because he could produce stories of higher quality and at a faster rate than his contemporaries. And why not? As another Times reporter pointed out, when you're fabricating stories, they're apt to turn out more dramatic, with juicier details, and with the editors' desired "angle," than those produced honestly and with fidelity to truth and accuracy. A newsroom joke goes that we shouldn't "let the truth interfere with a good story." But we all know that when we fudge the truth in pursuit of an angle, we risk exposure and embarrassment down the line.

* * *

THAT seems to be what's happened in the story of Pvt. Jessica Lynch, whose "dramatic" rescue from Iraqi captors has just recently been debunked by a BBC documentary.

Columnist Robert Scheer of the Los Angeles Times quotes the BBC's conclusion: "Her story is one of the most stunning pieces of news management ever conceived," which Scheer says is "the polite British way of saying 'liar, liar, pants on fire.'"

Lynch, according to "unnamed military sources," fought ferociously for her life, firing at the Iraqis even after she sustained multiple gunshot wounds and even getting stabbed after the Iraqi forces closed in.

"It has since emerged that Lynch was neither shot nor stabbed, but rather suffered accident injuries when her vehicle overturned," writes Scheer. Indeed, Iraqi doctors who rescued her "carefully tended her injuries, a broken arm and thigh and dislocated ankle, in contrast to US media reports that doctors had ignored Lynch."

The deception didn't stop there. "Where the manipulation of this saga really gets ugly is in the premeditated manufacture of the rescue itself," says Scheer.

* * *

THE STORY peddled by the Pentagon was that special forces stormed the hospital where Lynch was being held, encountered hostile fire and then scooped her up and flew her out in a helicopter.

What the BBC unearthed, through interviews with the hospital staff, was that Iraqi forces had abandoned the area long before the rescue operation. Two days earlier, the staff had informed the Americans about this and even made arrangements for Lynch's transfer. "But as the ambulance, with Private Lynch inside, approached the checkpoint, American troops opened fire, forcing it to flee back to the hospital. The Americans had almost killed their prize catch," the BBC reported.

One of the doctors present described the raid as "like a Hollywood film," recalling the movies of Sylvester Stallone and Jackie Chan. The footage of the "rescue" was shot not by journalists but by soldiers with night-vision cameras, then fed in real time to the Central Command in Qatar. Says Scheer: "The Lynch rescue story—a made-for-TV bit of official propaganda—will probably survive as the war's most heroic moment, despite proving as fictitious as the stated rationales for the invasion itself."

This, then is the media atmosphere in which Blair, with all his personal troubles and questionable work ethic, thrived and flourished. He has called his editors "idiots" for being largely clueless about his history of fabrications. But one wonders if that's not what American officials think of their citizens, too.

Layhaja: a legend from Jolo

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

(The following story may be pure invention on the part of the author but it should provide a change of pace from politics, who went to D.C. and who didn't, SARS, and is she running or isn't she?)

ONCE upon a time Jolo was ruled by the *panglima* Diamarol, a very proud and rich man who had a daughter whom he adored. The best pearls of the Sulu Seas, the richest jabul, the most precious gems, shawls of embroidered brocade from China—nothing was too good for Layhaja.

In Diamorol's beautiful garden, nature had placed a lake whose quiet waters sprouted from the cavity of a huge boulder. The waters were so limpid and transparent that the tiny stones at the bottom appeared to be within a hand's reach. Exotic flora from neighboring countries grew in profusion around the garden. The princess often went to the lake to bathe or to rest and dream under the shade of centuries-old banyan trees.

Since Jolo was under the king of Java, he sent his son Prince Bulkiah there on a mission. By chance the prince wandered into Diamarol's garden and met three maidens on the banks of the lake who asked him indignantly to leave. The daring prince ignored them and continued to contemplate the marvelous scene before him. Suddenly Layhaja surfaced from the waters where she had been swimming and was appalled at seeing a man, and a stranger at that, in their midst. The princess dove back in but the prince merely smiled and saluted.

Later that night while moonlight bathed the garden, the princess dreamed about the dark-complexioned stranger, his head covered with a red kerchief embroidered in gold, his *yatagan* at his waist. She thought him gallant and noble, his gesture of farewell graceful.

Suddenly the silence of the night was broken by the strains of a *kulintang* and the voice of a man singing. When the princess saw the stranger coming toward her, she attempted to flee but he detained her with an affectionate gesture.

"Stay, lovely Layhaja, beautiful lotus flower, do not flee."

"Who are you that you dare violate the peace of my garden?"

"I am Prince Bulkiah from Java and you with your dark hair have captured my heart."

She looked at him timidly; he stared, full of tender adoration. Again she tried to escape, but midway she turned and looked back. He continued to stare enraptured as she smiled and ran toward her quarters.

The following evening they met again in the garden. Layhaja was intensely happy. Blushing she lowered her eyes.

"Look at me, Layhaja, and don't be afraid. Let me look into your eyes that are the stars of my firmament. I love you little princess of the dark eyes."

Timidly she offered her hands. He held them and for a moment rested his forehead on them. And there beside the lake, witness of their love, between kisses and embraces, they swore eternal love. The flowers enfolded them in their perfume.

The days passed happily for the lovers. There was no other love like theirs. Until one day…

"Layhaja, light of my heaven, tomorrow I must leave for Java before dawn."

The moon paled, the birds were silent, even the air seemed suspended. The princess felt her heart stop beating. Timorously she embraced Bulkiah.

"Do not leave me, do not abandon me, my lord."

"Don't cry, my lotus flower, before two moons have passed I will return to marry you."

"I will wait for you."

"Do you swear by the great prophet?"

"Layhaja's word is sacred. And yours?"

"Not even death can stop me."

Bulkiah knelt and with profound adoration kissed the hem of her veil and left. Beside the lake she wept her heart out.

By this time Sulu was tired of being under the Javanese empire and declared war. The warriors sharpened their daggers and swords. They prepared their cannons. In their war ships they took off for Java.

Javanese and Suluanos fought man to man and the soil was covered in blood. In the end, the Suluanos returned victorious. A servant told Layhaja of the death of her beloved Bulkiah in the field of battle. The princess felt the sword that had slain him killed her as well. She wept while the whole town celebrated her father's victory. In her garden Layhaja, overcome with pain, wept for her lover who had been her father's enemy.

In the meantime a *datu* from Jolo sent an ambassador to ask for the hand of Layhaja. Diamarol, proud of such an honor, gave his consent.

Layhaja listened to her father's decision in silence. In silence she wandered out to the garden. The air was filled with the smell of champacas, butterflies approached the flowers amorously, the doves cooed and birds sang in their nests. Layhaja didn't see, didn't hear, didn't feel.

"Bulkiah," she shouted. "Bulkiah! Why didn't you come back? Where are you that you don't return to ease my pain? Bulkiah, take me with you." The rocks echoed her voice as the impassive lake reflected the sky. At night while everyone slept, Layhaja wept.

"Layhaja," she heard a voice calling her name. At the foot of her virginal bed, Bulkiah stood extending his hand and smiling, inviting her to go with him. "Layhaja," the voice called again.

She followed him into the garden and seeing him at the bottom of the lake, beckoning, she answered, "I come." The sound of a splash was heard. Then silence returned. Only the moon for a moment trembled in the waters.

Day dawned. In the lake, a strange new flower with petals like nacre stirred softly in the breeze. People believed then that Allah had compassion on Layhaja and transformed her into a flower.

Ever since in a mosque in Jolo, a pristine flower with pearlized leaves that once upon a time was a beautiful princess of the orient, is honored.

(From Socorro Llanderal's "Layhaja.")

Career shift

YOUNG BLOOD

Maureen G. Cristobal

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

THE OTHER day, a friend "texted" me. She was thinking of taking up nursing and she was asking for advice since I was enrolled in a nursing school.

You see, we are licensed physical therapists. We graduated from the university that is, in the words of a friend, "known for its excellent allied medical program." Our college has consistently topped the board exams since its earlier years. We have always believed we are the crème de la crème. And being graduates of this premier institution, we should have an edge when we look for jobs. So, why am I taking up nursing now? And why is my friend thinking of doing the same thing?

Where did graduating from the "best school for physical therapy" bring me? It brought me back to my dear old province to study again at a local university. Where did my dream of becoming a damned good therapist, of touching other people's lives, go? I'd like to think it has just taken the backseat for the time being. For how could I realize that dream when there aren't enough jobs for all of us?

Nurses are so much in demand everywhere, and the offers are really tempting. It's the most logical step to take at this time. But imagine my surprise when, on my first day at nursing school, I discovered that most of my classmates were doctors. Some even had lucrative practices. Why were they there? Everyone had only one answer: the American Dream. All of us wanted a piece of that dream. And what easier way is there to attain it than to be a nurse?

I wonder why everybody wants to leave the country. Have we lost faith in our government's capacity to create a better future for us? I guess most of us are tired of waiting for better opportunities in our own country. Most of us have worked our butts off for all of our lives but we never realized our dreams. The paychecks aren't enough.

It's even more frustrating for new graduates like us. We left the university full of hope and willing to give everything we had. But the jobs just are not there. Only a lucky few find jobs where they can practice what they learned. Others have to settle for jobs that are completely unrelated to their professions. But then beggars can't be choosers, right?

So much for idealism. Now I just hope that after nursing school, I will find a better job in the land of milk and honey, earn dollars and fulfill my dreams for myself and for my future family. Maybe there I will find a job as a physical therapist and become really good at touching other people's lives.

Maureen G. Cristobal, 22, is back in her hometown of Ramon, Isabela.

FedExed siopao

Carlos Alfonso Q. Santos

IT was another bitterly cold winter day in Vienna, Virginia, a quiet suburb of Washington, D.C. where I was staying while applying for residency training. My cousin and her husband were at work, and their kids were in school. I was all by my lonesome, sitting in the dining room, my review materials spread before me, and tapping my pencil and worrying about my upcoming accreditation exam.

I had gone to the United States for residency because I wanted to broaden my horizon. After nine years of undergraduate and medical training at the University of the Philippines, I felt that to expand my knowledge and outlook, I had to leave and pursue post-graduate studies elsewhere.

The phone rang. It was my aunt in Los Angeles, calling to check on her beloved nephew.

"*Kumusta ka naman?*"

"*OK naman po.*"

"That's good. Listen, *anak*. I FedExed 20 siopaos for you so that you will have something to eat while you're reviewing. I know that you don't have Filipino stores there, that's why I sent some siopao."

Wonderful. There I was, striking out on my own, trying to build a brave new life for myself, and my aunt, in her well-intentioned desire to take care of her family, was undermining my efforts at independence.

"When the siopao arrives tomorrow, wrap them individually in Ziploc bags. Do you know what Ziploc bags are?"

Anyone with at least five brain cells on this side of the world knows what Ziploc bags are. I mean, duh, it's Ziploc. Apparently, my aunt thinks I am still the 6-year-old she had to dry and change after I fell into a pond in their Japanese garden back in the Philippines.

"After you put them in Ziploc, place all of them in the freezer. When you want to eat one, wrap it in a damp paper towel… Do you know what paper towels are, *anak*?"

Jesus Christ.

"And heat it in the microwave for two minutes."

I listened to her instructions and despaired of ever being treated like an adult. Filipino aunts and mothers have a way of being unaware of the fact that their children, nieces and nephews are grown up and able to take care of themselves. It's a cultural thing—this need to control, direct, advise and send siopao by courier. It will never cease.

"Imagine, *anak*, you're a doctor already. And soon, you'll be starting residency here. I'm sure you'll do very well. I'm so proud of you!"

My spirits lightened. There I was, worried about my exam, distressed over the outcome of my applications, and on the whole, determinedly underestimating my abilities. But my aunt had absolutely no doubts about the success of my endeavor. I smiled and marveled at her contradictory faith in me. How can she believe that I can get into a residency program easily and yet doubt my ability to feed myself? It is a mystery I will never be able to unravel.

"I will call your mom and tell her that I sent you siopao. She'll be happy to hear that you're well taken care of here in America."

That is true. Indeed, I am well taken care of. Snug and warm in my cousin's home in the dead of winter, I feel nothing but utmost gratitude. Truly, the Philippines is wherever a Filipino resides. It is obvious in the warm houses we keep and the packages we send each other. FedExed siopao, *sinigang* mix, longganisa—these are odd testaments to the warmth of our people and the verve of our culture. We are creatures who demand only simple joys and simple pleasures. A piping hot bowl of *sinigang*. A platter of newly-cooked rice permeating the kitchen with its fragrant, sweetish scent. A well-told joke and a good laugh later.

"*O sige, iyon na muna, anak.* Take care of yourself, and don't forget to drink your milk."

We said our goodbyes and I stood up and stretched. I walked to the refrigerator and poured myself a tall glass of milk.

I am a good boy, after all.

Carlos Alfonso Q. Santos, 26, is a biologist and a physician.

Maynilad's being prejudged

MWSS Chief Regulator Eduardo Santos' letter in the April 29 issue of the INQUIRER revealed the bias that has colored his decisions as head of an office that is supposed to be objective and to balance the interests and concerns of the three sectors comprising the water utility industry: government, concessionaires and consumers.

In writing that the privatization of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System was a "big success," Santos listed a number of achievements since the two water concessionaires began operating the water system in Metro Manila in 1997. But then he divorced Maynilad from these accomplishments and wrote pointedly: "We at the MWSS see Maynilad as the only failure but not the whole privatization project."

How can Maynilad be not a part of these accomplishments when it accounts for 60 percent of the Metro Manila operations?

When Santos speaks of the present 4,026 million liters a day (MLD) water production, 2,348 MLD of that come from Maynilad. When he speaks of about 9.8 million people enjoying water service, 5.7 million are Maynilad customers. And when he speaks about 127,640 urban poor households having their own water service, 67,625 households of that are beneficiaries of Maynilad's Bayan Tubig program.

It is apparent that Santos has failed to appreciate the role the Regulatory Office plays in the public-private partnership that is the linchpin of the MWSS privatization. That is, to regulate the relationship among MWSS, concessionaires and consumers, so as to integrate and balance sectoral interests and obtain optimum benefits for all.

Santos has lost the sense of objectivity and fairness that are essential requirements for his position. It is obvious that he can no longer carry out his responsibilities in a manner that will not erode the credibility and effectiveness of his office. His pronouncements, in fact, indicate that he has already prejudged the case being heard by the Major Dispute Panel with regard to Maynilad's decision to terminate its concession.

Now is the time for a truly independent chief regulator to help establish a regulatory atmosphere that will realize the benefits of the MWSS privatization.

—JESUS S. MATUBIS JR.,
manager, Corporate Affairs and Media Relations, Maynilad Water Services Inc., MWSS Compound, Katipunan, Quezon City

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Revitalizing RP-US security relations

THE PHILIPPINES has been one of the longest Western colonies in the world. Despite all our efforts to be truly independent, we have not completely gotten rid of our colonial mentality which makes us so weak-kneed that we need a crutch to lean on.

For more than four decades, we leaned on the US security umbrella. Philippine defense was predicated on the condition that it would continue to allow its use as a platform for intervention to safeguard American regional interests anywhere along the South China Sea and the Southwestern Pacific and westward to East Asia, to the Indian Ocean and the Middle East.

Our over-reliance on US support, especially in the face of ongoing insurgencies and our economic situation, has weakened our effort to develop our internal and external defense capabilities. And this has tied our security to the United States through various military-related arrangements for assistance, mutual defense and military basing.

Despite these arrangements, however, military assistance came in trickles. Because of the assessment that a military invasion was far-fetched, assistance was limited to matériel and equipment to counter homegrown insurgency.

Though external threats are remote, there is a need for the Armed Forces to modernize and upgrade its external defense capability in order to achieve a respectable defense posture.

America has come back. She has revived her interest in our country especially in the fight against international terrorism. It is time to review our bilateral security agreements with her in order to redefine and establish mutually acceptable arrangements in all dimensions and instances of foreseeable threats to either party, considering the capability of each to act in a threat situation. It is worthwhile remembering that the effectiveness and mutuality of our defense arrangements with the United States have been doubted all along, firstly because of perceived infirmities and bias toward American interests, and secondly because of past experience.

It is also worthwhile to remember during the last war Filipino soldiers who fought alongside American soldiers, using the same weaponry, under the same environment of risks and danger to their lives and under the American flag. The status of Filipino veterans therefore should also be included in the review of the bilateral agreements between the Philippines and the United States.

—MAJ. GEN. FORTUNATO U. ABAT,
AFP (Ret.), Forab Bldg. 121, Kamuning Road, Quezon City

Bring the bells of Balangiga back

THIS is in response to the article that came out the other day about the possible visit of US President George Bush to the Philippines.

President Bush, please come but please bring back at least one of the bells of Balangiga!

As the sculptor-designer of the Balangiga Encounter Monument, I would love to have the bell installed in the belfry of the monument. But the bell should be returned and mounted on the belfry of the Balangiga Church where it belongs.

Sept. 28, 2003 will be the 102nd anniversary of the famous encounter of the Filipino people in Samar against the occupation of American troops. It would be most appropriate if the bells of Balangiga be returned as soon as possible.

—NAPOLEON VELOSO ABUEVA,
National Artist

Lina law passed in the light of day

THIS is to correct the statement made by Neal H. Cruz in his column last May 12, 2003 regarding the passage of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992 which he called the Lina Law.

It is simply not true that the UDHA was approved by the Senate "in the dead of night without a quorum." The records of the Senate will bear this out.

Senate Bill No. 234, introduced by Sen. Jose Lina, was filed on Dec. 14, 1987. The bill was referred to the committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement and the committee on finance on Dec. 15, 1987. The committees conducted seven public hearings from 1988 to 1990 after which the committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement filed Committee Report No. 1397, recommending the approval of a substitute S.B. No. 234 on Aug. 15, 1991.

The committee report was submitted to the Senate and was assigned for consideration by special order on Aug. 19, 1991. This bill was sponsored on Sept. 2, 1991. The period of interpellation began on Oct. 22, 1991 and continued with the interpellations of Sen. Teofisto Guingona Jr. on Oct. 23, 1991 and Sen. Ernesto Maceda on Nov. 26, 1991.

After being subjected to individual amendments, the bill was approved on second reading on Nov. 28, 1991. The Senate Journal shows that the bill was approved at around 10 o'clock in the morning of Nov. 28 and not "in the dead of night" as Cruz claimed.

Senate Bill No. 234 was approved on third reading with 20 senators voting in favor, no abstention and no negative votes in the afternoon of Dec. 9, 1991. (All the senators present voted in favor of the bill.)

9. The conference committee on S.B. No. 234 and H.B. No. 34310 met to reconcile the two bills on the following dates: Dec. 18, 1991, Jan. 16, 1992, Jan. 21, 1992, Jan. 23, 1992 and Jan. 27, 1992.

The Conference Committee Report was approved by the Senate in the afternoon of Feb. 3, 1992. Republic Act No. 7279, the UHDA Law, was approved and signed into law by President Corazon C. Aquino on March 24, 1992.

From the above, it is very clear that the passage of the UDHA or the Lina Law was done in the light of day and not railroaded in the dead of night, as Cruz implied.

—ELEUTERIO P. SARMIENTO,
Director III, Senate

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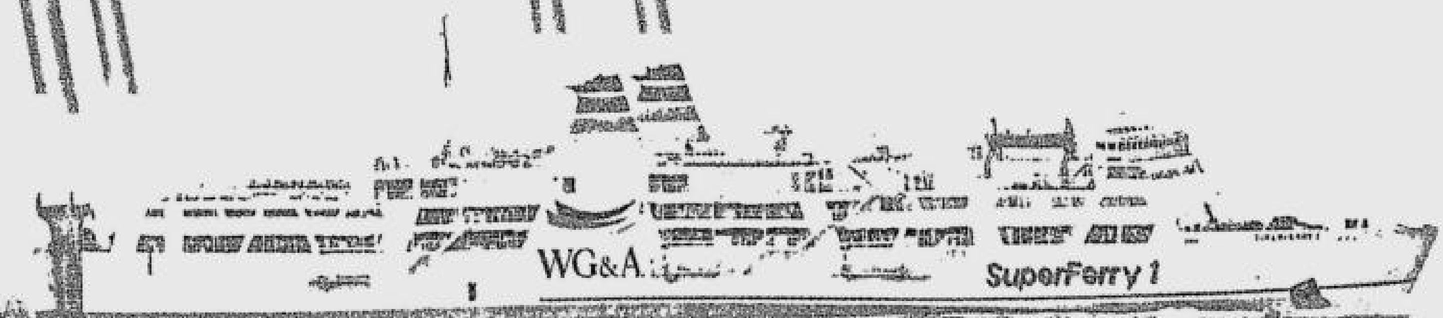

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Algeria quake toll tops 1,000 deaths

REGHAIA, Algeria—Hundreds of people spent the night outdoors in Algeria as rescuers Friday desperately tried to unearth survivors of the devastating earthquake, which killed nearly 1,100 people and injured close to 7,000.

The powerful earth tremor —Algeria's worst since 1980— left a trail of widespread destruction in Algiers and several towns to the east of the capital.

Provisional figures from the interior ministry put the death toll at 1,092, with 6,782 injured. Hundreds of residents were feared buried under tons of concrete and brick, and it was nearly certain the death toll would jump far higher.

The worst loss of life was recorded in the Boumerdes administrative region, 50 km east of Algiers, where 624 people died, and in the Algiers district where 457 people lost their lives.

In Reghaia, some 35 km east of Algiers, authorities requisitioned the municipal stadium, setting up tents for families whose houses were destroyed by Wednesday's quake.

Others in nearby communities flopped down mattresses in open spaces or in public parks, fearful another tremor could bring about even more devastation. An aftershock struck the area early Friday, but there were no reports of further damage.

In the small coastal town of Boumerdes, the spectacle of the destruction caused by the quake was particularly shocking: dozens of once imposing buildings crumpled to the ground.

Armed with shovels and axes civil defense workers, conscripts, families of the missing and young volunteers appeared helpless when confronted with buildings that had collapsed in a matter of moments.

Hopelessly underequipped, they tried as best they could to pull survivors from the rubble.

"We are here because our these are neighbors, our friends and we have to try everything," said a weary Ali, clawing at rubble and harboring few illusions as to the outcome of his efforts.

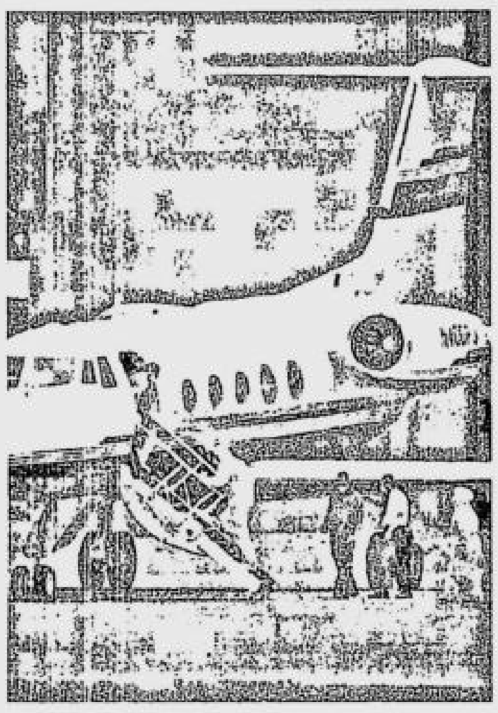
Rescuers did manage to pull a young girl out of what remained of an apartment building early Friday morning, an AFP reporter said.

President Abdelaziz Bouteflika visited the Boumerdes region and has decreed three days of national mourning.

The earthquake struck early Wednesday evening just as many were sitting down to dinner. Panicked inhabitants of Algiers and the neighboring areas poured onto the streets. Thousands of others were buried in the rubble of collapsed apartment buildings and houses.

The epicenter of the quake, recorded at 5.8 on the Richter scale, was located between Thenia and Zenmouri, according to the Algerian center for astronomic and astrophysical research, while US seismologists put the strength at 6.8.

A seismologist tried unsuccessfully to reassure the stunned inhabitants of Algeria that the dozens of aftershocks would weaken and then progressively disappear. *AP*



AN UNIDENTIFIED US doctor in white protective gown boards a US-bound Gulfstream jet May 23, in Taipei's domestic Sung Shan Airport. The doctor was helping Taiwan battle SARS left the island after developing a fever and other symptoms possibly caused by the often-deadly virus. AP

Taiwan reports surge in SARS cases continues

TAIPEI—Taiwan announced another surge in the number of new SARS infections Friday even though the government insisted the health crisis was under control and urged residents to remain calm.

The number of new infections reported by Taipei declined from Thursday's record 65 to 55, but the figure was still well ahead of the previous daily high and the island has now reported over 300 new cases in a week.

Taiwan health authorities said an outbreak in the south of island was being brought under control despite the decision Wednesday by the World Health Organization to extend a travel warning from Taipei to cover the whole island.

Li Ming-liang, who heads Taiwan's anti-SARS task force, said the crisis in the south had now peaked.

"Situations have stabilized in the south and there is no reason to panic," Li told reporters.

Taiwan has been the focus of attention this week because of the rapid increase in the number of new infections as the outbreak appeared to be waning in other SARS hotspots in Asia.

Friday's announcement saw the island's total confirmed infections rise to 538 with 60 deaths and a further 1,000 suspected cases.

The island is the third worst affected region behind China and Hong Kong in a global outbreak which has killed nearly 700 people and infected more than 8,000 in around 30 countries.

There is no cure, vaccine or diagnostic test for the mystery respiratory illness which first appeared in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong in November. Scientists believe it may have originated in pigs.

Amid accusations of incompetence against local health authorities and the resignation last week of Health Minister Twu Shiing-jer, the World Health Organization and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have sent staff to Taiwan to help contain the outbreak.

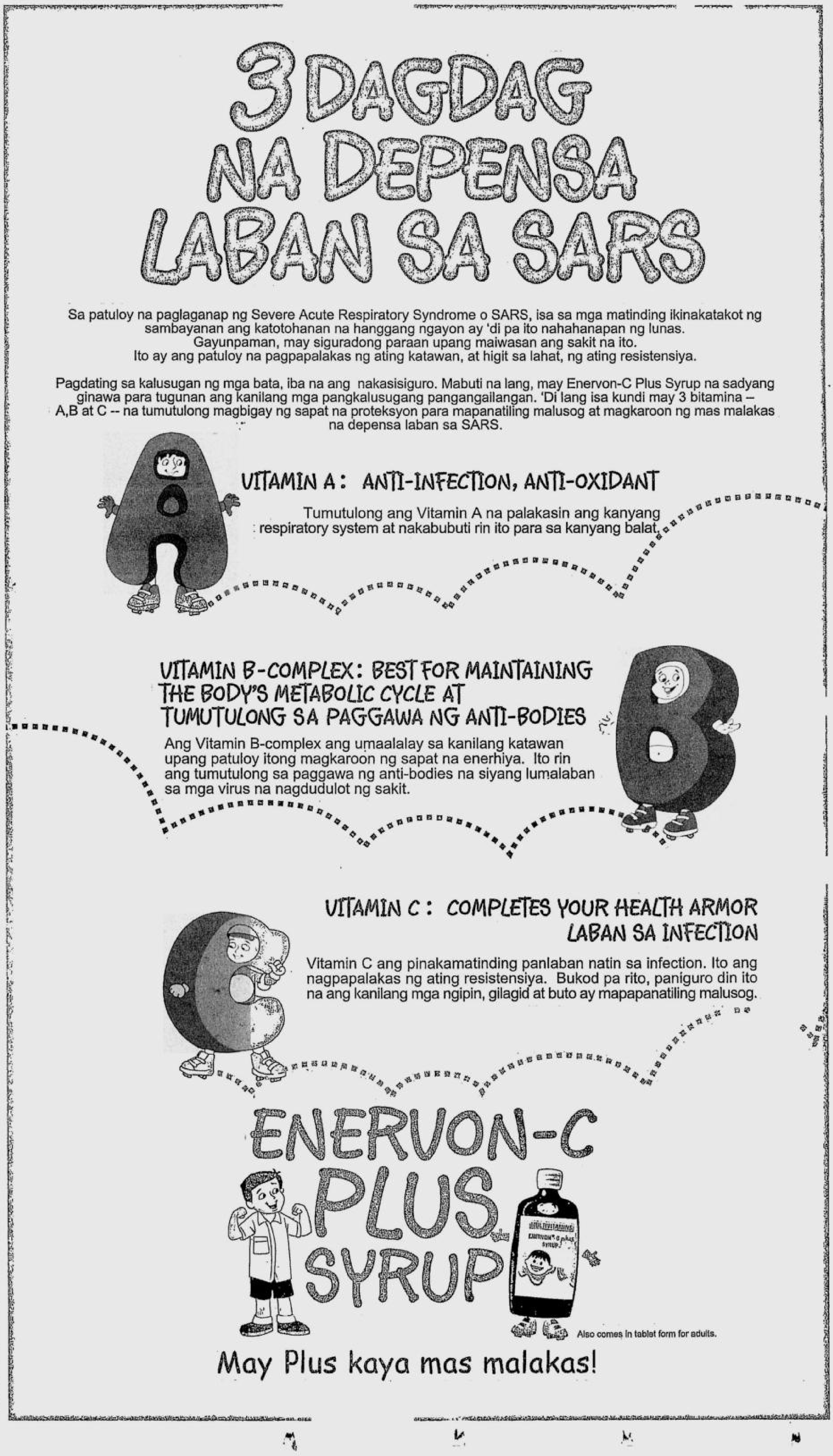
One of the US CDC specialists, Chesley Richards, was feared to have contracted the disease after developing SARS symptoms and was expected to be sent home by charter plane later Friday.

Authorities in Taiwan have started investigating alleged delays, cover-ups and other irregularities at hospitals which are believed to have led to the island-wide spread of the epidemic.

The death toll from SARS rose to 31 in Singapore late Thursday after two elderly men died, the ministry of health said.

There were no new infections reported Thursday and the number of cases remained at 206, with only one new case reported this month.

Although the number of infections is now decline in Beijing, the world's worst-hit city, the Chinese capital's tourism industry's is expected to lose around 4.8 billion dollars this year, an economic research institute was quoted as saying Friday. *AFP*


3 DAGDAG NA DEPENSA LABAN SA SARS

Sa patuloy na paglaganap ng Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome o SARS, isa sa mga matinding ikinakatakot ng sambayanan ang katotohanan na hanggang ngayon ay 'di pa ito nahahanapan ng lunas. Gayunpaman, may siguradong paraan upang maiwasan ang sakit na ito. Ito ay ang patuloy na pagpapalakas ng ating katawan, at higit sa lahat, ng ating resistensiya.

Pagdating sa kalusugan ng mga bata, iba na ang nakasisiguro. Mabuti na lang, may Enervon-C Plus Syrup na sadyang ginawa para tugunan ang kanilang mga pangkalusugang pangangailangan. 'Di lang isa kundi may 3 bitamina – A,B at C -- na tumutulong magbigay ng sapat na proteksyon para mapanatiling malusog at magkaroon ng mas malakas na depensa laban sa SARS.

VITAMIN A : ANTI-INFECTION, ANTI-OXIDANT

Tumutulong ang Vitamin A na palakasin ang kanyang respiratory system at nakabubuti rin ito para sa kanyang balat.

VITAMIN B-COMPLEX : BEST FOR MAINTAINING THE BODY'S METABOLIC CYCLE AT TUMUTULONG SA PAGGAWA NG ANTI-BODIES

Ang Vitamin B-complex ang umaalalay sa kanilang katawan upang patuloy itong magkaroon ng sapat na enerhiya. Ito rin ang tumutulong sa paggawa ng anti-bodies na siyang lumalaban sa mga virus na nagdudulot ng sakit.

VITAMIN C : COMPLETES YOUR HEALTH ARMOR LABAN SA INFECTION

Vitamin C ang pinakamatinding panlaban natin sa infection. Ito ang nagpapalakas ng ating resistensiya. Bukod pa rito, paniguro din ito na ang kanilang mga ngipin, gilagid at buto ay mapapanatiling malusog.

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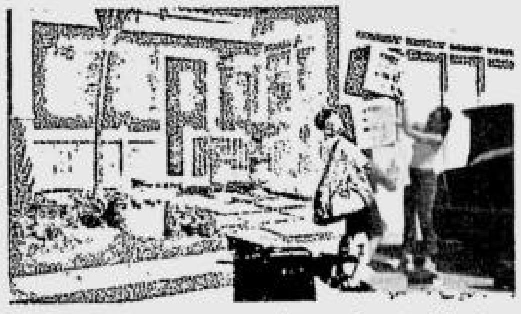

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AYALA AVENUE
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Ayala Land's first cluster-community development in Visayas-Mindanao, Plantazionne Verdana Homes in Negros Occidental is a new concept in community living. It offers affordable resort living close to the city, encouraging family and community relationships. All in a safe and warm environment with all its convenient features and amenities.

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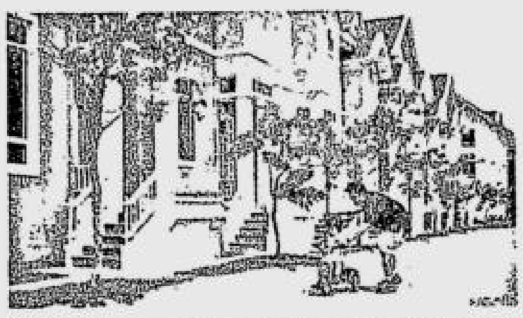
AT YOUR PRIME Each day seems better. The future keeps getting brighter. It's time for bigger things.



Right at the center, in the quiet side of town. Montgomery Place can't be described any better. Envisioned to be a quiet neighborhood of quaint rows of townhouses designed along the genteel lines of the American South for early nesters. A pocket of green space within the busy city, a short drive away from Greenhills, Diliman, and Makati, nothing is too far away.

MONTGOMERY PLACE
An AYALA Community

Mediterranean living right in the heart of Quezon City. Located near two of the country's premiere universities, full nesters will find this an ideal setting for their families to grow. Following a cluster-concept, it presents a novel approach to community living by grouping homes around distinct open spaces to encourage interaction and good relationships among neighbors.

Ferndale Homes
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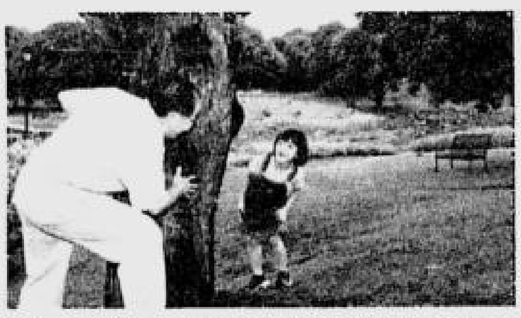
The look. The feel. The space. The ease of modern living. Cosmopolitan, yet comfortable. It's the life and style every successful and mobile professional deserves. It's a premiere home that sits right within Legaspi Village, in the middle of Makati's Business District. A home above it all.

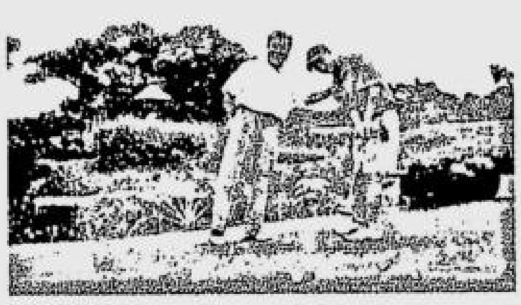
one legazpi park
An AYALA Community

AT YOUR PEAK The hard work. The long hours. Now's the time to reap the rewards.



What could probably be the last vast patch of greenery in its area, Ayala Hillside Estates is truly a treasure. Imagine, 23 hectares of rolling terrain, meandering the Capitol Hills Golf & Country Club. Just a drive away from the best schools and the city's conveniences, Ayala Hillside Estates offers an instant escape from the busy city.

AYALA Hillside Estates



Set amidst breathtaking views of Laguna de Bay and Mt. Makiling is Ayala Greenfield Estates. A weekend getaway, or a home away from home, it is a world where the sound, smell and feel of nature embraces you. Each lot comes with a share at the Golf & Leisure Club with a modest activation fee. Now, weekends will never be the same again.

AYALA GREENFIELD ESTATES
An AYALA South Community

Ayala Westgrove Heights is envisioned to be the next Big Thing. It's a magnificent and sweeping expanse of over 400 hectares of groves, rolling hills and valleys blanketed by thousands of mango trees. This complete, high-end subdivision is situated in Silang, Cavite near prime schools. It's truly the land where memories can grow and love can last for generations.

AYALA Westgrove Heights

A three-tower premium residential community within the prestigious Greenbelt Commercial Center. Designed to enhance the vibrant and dynamic lifestyle of the country's "movers", The Residences at Greenbelt offers all the comforts of home and the amenities of condominium living. It offers the convenience to enjoy the country's premiere dining, shopping and entertainment destination at any given time.

An AYALA Community
THE RESIDENCES AT GREENBELT

The premiere residential address in Negros, Ayala North Point is a community following the village concept with a central core that will house retail establishments, a civic center and a school. Designed to work with its environment rather than altering it, Ayala North Point rises in harmony with its natural surroundings like river gorges and verdant fields.

AYALA North Point

An Ayala residential estate in a city ranked as one of the best in Asia, Ayala Heights Cebu is a high-end subdivision nestled in a scenic mountain ridge with year-round cool climate. This highland retreat within the city promises the comforts of home and an investment opportunity that is distinctly Ayala. A masterplanned community, Ayala Heights Cebu expertly blends the best of modern facilities and the rugged outdoors.

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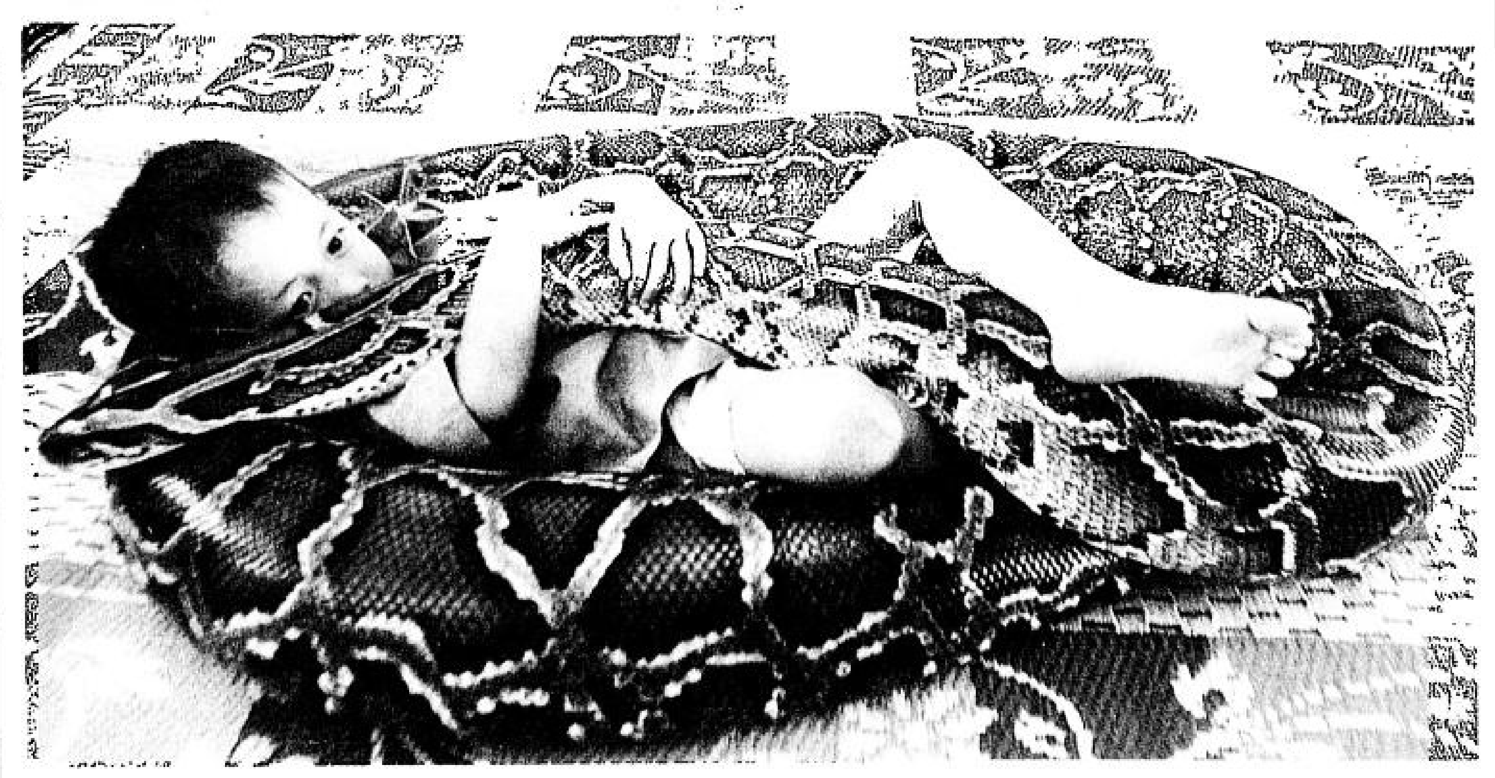


SNAKESKIN CAMBODIAN BED

Three-year-old Cambodian boy Oeun Sambat hugs his best friend, a four-meter long female python named Chamreun or 'Lucky' in the village of Sit Tbow on May 18. Superstitious villagers in the impoverished southeast Asian nation are flocking to see the boy, who they believe has supernatural powers and was probably the son of a dragon in a former life. REUTERS

Indonesia troops kill 38 Aceh rebels

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—Indonesia's military said on Friday it had killed 38 rebels in Aceh province since a fresh offensive began, but added the campaign was tough and separatists were melting into the civilian population.

With questions being raised over the plight of civilians, the BBC reported a witness alleging troops executed eight villagers.

The military has denied killing non-combatants since the offensive began on Monday to end the Muslim rebels' 27-year campaign for independence for Aceh, an oil- and gas-rich province on the northern tip of Sumatra island.

"Our latest number of killed separatists is 38, valid up until last night. Reports are still coming in, most of them from Bireun where fights are intensifying," Aceh military spokesperson Firdaus Komarno said, referring to Bireun district on the north coast. He said 11 rebels had been captured.

On Thursday, the military had put the number of dead Free Aceh Movement (GAM) fighters at 16.

A rebel spokesperson has insisted no separatists have been killed while saying nearly 50 civilians have died in military operations, amid reports troops had executed villagers in one location.

The BBC quoted a witness at the village of Mata Mamplam in Bireun district who alleged troops executed eight villagers, all males aged 11 to 20. They had been shot in the head, the witness said. The fighting has hit transport in the province.

"The roads are not closed but many vehicles are burned and passengers are afraid to go," driver Raja Tinayungan told Reuters at Banda Aceh's bus terminal.

Only about five passenger vehicles had left the terminal on Friday when normally about 75 would have set off, he said. *Reuters*

UN moves to mend rifts from Iraq war

UNITED NATIONS—The UN Security Council, taking a first step toward patching deep rifts created by the US-led war on Baghdad, has granted the United States and Britain broad powers to run postwar Iraq and use its abundant oil resources to finance its reconstruction.

Despite misgivings by many of its members, the council voted 14-0 on Thursday to adopt a resolution ending nearly 13 years of burdensome UN sanctions on Iraq's economy in a big victory for the George W. Bush administration.

Syria, Iraq's neighbor and the sole Arab member of the Security Council, initially did not cast a vote and left its seat empty, only to announce seven hours later it would have voted "Yes."

Syrian UN envoy Fayssal Mekdad said Damascus had not been given enough time to consider the resolution. Its belated backing for the resolution "can in no manner be interpreted as a change of Syria's position of rejecting the war on Iraq as an illegitimate war," he told the 15-member council.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan praised council members for reaching a consensus on a plan for Iraqi reconstruction after the bitter and unsuccessful US drive for advance council approval for the US-led invasion.

"Whatever differences there have been in the recent past, we now have a new basis on which to work. And we must all work very hard, keeping the interests of Iraqis at the forefront of all our efforts," Annan told the council.

He pledged to name a special representative for Iraq shortly, to flesh out a UN role in the reconstruction effort in cooperation with occupying powers Washington and London.

Diplomats said Sergio Vieira de Mello, currently the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the US favorite for the Iraq job, may be offered the new post as early as Friday.

To broaden support for its plan, Washington made last-minute concessions opening the door to an independent, albeit limited, UN role and the possibility of UN weapons inspectors returning to Iraq.

France, Germany, China and Russia, who had opposed the US-led war, voted for the resolution but had reservations.

"The war that we did not want, and the majority of the council did not want, has taken place," Germany's UN ambassador, Gunter Pleuger, told reporters. "We cannot undo history. We are now in a situation where we have to take action for the sake of the Iraqi people."

US Ambassador John Negroponte hailed the lifting of sanctions as "a momentous event for the people of Iraq."

"It is time for the Iraqi people to benefit from their natural resources," he said. *Reuters*

Canada looks for more mad cow cases

CALGARY, Alberta—Canada's frantic search for more cases of mad cow disease spread beyond its biggest cattle region on Thursday, as inspectors sealed off several farms and more countries banned Canadian beef.

The crisis, sparked by the revelation on Tuesday that one cow in the big beef-producing province of Alberta tested positive for the deadly brain-wasting disease, led officials to quarantine nine farms, two of them in the neighboring Saskatchewan, where the diseased cow may have been born.

Inspectors have so far found no other cases, Claude Lavigne of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency said as the country's export-oriented beef industry ground nearly to a halt.

One quarantined herd is the one in which the cow with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, was found, five are linked to where it was earlier in its life and three are linked to its possible offspring.

"The ongoing investigation into the cause of this incident of BSE is now focusing on confirmation of the cow's birthplace and the history of the feeding practices and sources of animal feed for this cow," Lavigne said.

At stake is the $2.9 billion beef industry in Alberta, where cattle ranching has been a way of life for more than a century, as well as North America's faith in the safety of its food supply. Last year, Alberta shipped more than half a million live cattle to the United States.

Using bills of lading and records of livestock brands, and tapping into a new cattle database, investigators are tracing the origin of the animal—Canada's first mad cow case in a decade—and trying to find out if any others are infected.

Despite the tracking effort and repeated assurances by health officials and politicians that the beef is safe, Russia, Singapore and Indonesia joined the United States, Japan and other countries in temporarily banning Canadian shipments.

The US Department of Agriculture has put its own industry under the microscope to assess whether feedlots, meat plants and ranches are at any risk of the disease spreading. *Reuters*

US dissolves Iraqi's armed forces

BAGHDAD—Iraq's military and the security organizations that supported Saddam Hussein's regime have been dissolved, and a new defense force will be set up to replace them, the US civil administrator announced Friday.

The move was the latest in a series of steps designed to eliminate vestiges of Saddam's regime from postwar Iraq.

"The Coalition Provisional Authority plans to create, in the near future, a New Iraqi Corps. This is the first step in forming a national self-defense capability for a free Iraq," said the statement released by L. Paul Bremer, the administration's top official.

"Under civilian control, that Corps will be professional, nonpolitical, militarily effective, and representative of all Iraqis," it said.

The statement did not elaborate on when the new defense force would be set up. But US officials have indicated in the past that it would include members of the army, navy and air force who were not compromised by their association to the banned Baath Party and who were not involved in criminal acts.

Under the new orders, the Ministry of Defense, the Republican Guard and "other specified security institutions which constituted and supported the most repressive activities of Saddam Hussein's regime," also have been disbanded. *AP*

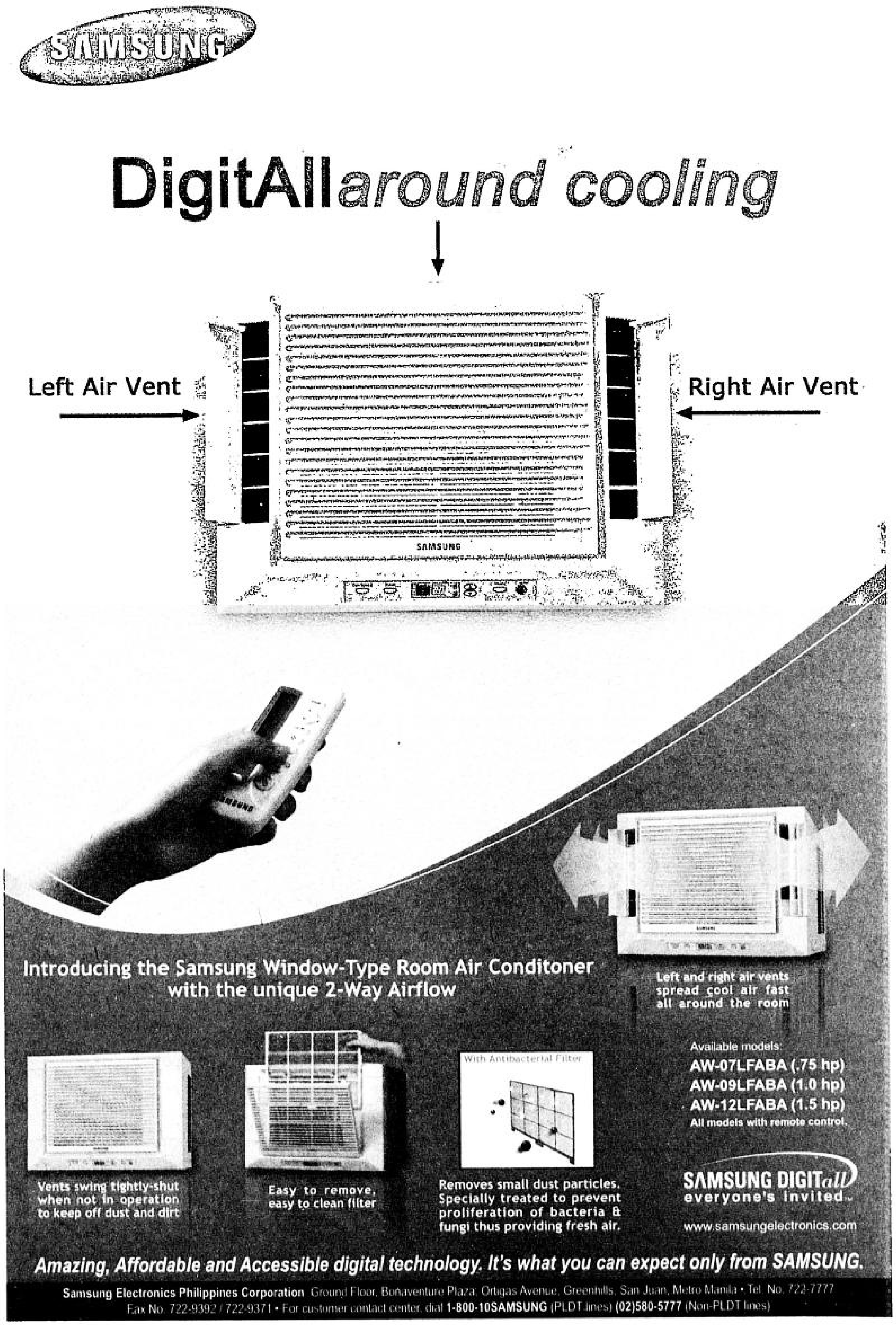
WORLDBRIEFS

$400.5-B US defense bill passed

WASHINGTON—The US Congress on Thursday overwhelmingly passed a $400.5 billion defense bill that ends a decade-long ban on research and development of small nuclear weapons, a step critics said may heighten risks of nuclear war. The Senate voted 98-1 for its bill authorizing next year's defense programs that repeals the ban on study and development of "mini-nukes," which Congress imposed in 1993 to stem their spread to other nations. The Bush administration has said it just wants to study and has no plans to build them, although Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said they could be useful in destroying biological and chemical arms other countries may have hidden underground. *Reuters*

Oldest man to climb Everest

KATMANDU—A 70-year-old Japanese scaled Mount Everest on Thursday, a week before the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of the peak, becoming the oldest person to climb the world's highest mountain, Nepal's Tourism Ministry said. Yuichiro Miura, a professional skier and a high school headmaster from Sapporo in Japan, reached the 8,850 meter summit using the Southeast Ridge route pioneered by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay on May 29, 1953. Miura, a well-known adventurer in Japan who has in the past skied down the Himalayas, shattered the previous record set by another Japanese, Tomiyasu Ishikawa, who climbed Mount Everest two years ago at the age of 65. *Reuters*



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2 men nabbed in broadcaster's slay

LUCENA CITY—Five days after the murder of dwTI broadcaster Apolinario Pobeda, members of Task Force Polly (TFP) arrested two suspected gunmen on Thursday in Pagbilao, Quezon.

Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Quezon police chief and TFP head, identified the suspects as Eulogio "Eloy" Patulay, 35 and his brother Eric, 20.

"The suspects were positively identified by the eye witness," Padilla told newsmen. Padilla, in a press statement, said the arresting team recovered 45 cal. and 9-mm pistols from the two suspects.

He begged off from revealing possible motives behind the killing.

Members of the TFP, which is composed of policemen, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, National Bureau of Investigation and the Military Intelligence Group, were also tight-lipped about their operations.

The INQUIRER learned from sources that the Patulay brothers were often seen accompanying Lucena City Councilor Romano Talaga, one of the sons of Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. in his sorties outside the city.

But Mayor Talaga clarified that the Patulay brothers "were just some of the ordinary people that I helped in the past. Perhaps for them, accompanying my son if they were around is their way of showing gratitude."

Romano admitted in a telephone interview that the two suspects were sometimes his companions. "They hang around with my own people. But if I'm within the city, they are not with me," he said.

"But I believe in their innocence. In fact, no guns were recovered from their possession. They voluntarily surrendered their guns because they revealed the gun's location," he explained.

The Talagas charged that the TFP was pressured to produce suspects from their camp to satisfy the public perception that they were involved in the Pobeda murder. The mayor said all his men were suspects in the case.

"To satisfy them, why can't they just arrest all of my men and make them undergo all kinds of laboratory examinations, so with their guns if they have any. If found out that they were really the killers of Polly and should they implicate me, then let us all meet in court," Mayor Talaga said.

But Padilla said no one was pressuring the TFP. "What we've done was pure police investigation. We're just doing our job," he said. Padilla said they are now hunting the third suspect who had fled to Laguna.

Statistics showed that 41 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. Not one have been solved.

Pobeda made a mark in the local broadcast circle in Quezon through his sex scandal stories involving local personalities, and patented tirades and below-the-belt personal digs passed on as blind items. Most of them obviously pertained to Mayor Talaga.

The hard-hitting radio commentator was gunned down on May 17.

Antonio Pobeda, a retired police senior superintendent in Lucena and uncle of the victim, said the arrest was a welcome development.

Joselito Ojeda, the victim's boss and owner of ConAmor Broadcasting System, described the development as a manifestation of fast police action.

"These kinds of developments ensure justice for the death of Polly Pobeda," he said.

In Cagayan de Oro City, the Press Club here (COPC) commemorated Press Freedom Week by protesting recent attacks on journalists and intensifying the campaign to speed up the decriminalization of the libel law.

The journalists criticized the government's failure to protect journalists.

The alleged gunman of Pagadian City journalist Edgar Damalerio, for example, remains at large today, more than a year since he was shot dead while on his way home in May 2002. Former police officer Guillermo Wapile, the alleged killer, was reportedly allowed to escape by his protectors in the police.

Jerry Orcullo, COPC president, said Damalerio's case was a glaring example of how justice was being served in this country.

Orcullo said libel is a plain act of harassment against crusading journalists.

He said this was the main reason the COPC was calling on journalists-turned-lawmakers to speed up the passage of the bill decriminalizing libel. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT IS exactly 376 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

New public hearing to discuss GMOs

BAGUIO CITY—The Senate is willing to give critics of Bt corn another chance to rebut Malacañang's decision to commercialize genetically modified (GM) crops, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said here on Thursday.

Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on agriculture, scheduled another public hearing next week to accommodate new materials that a group of hunger strikers said would prove that the Bureau of Plant Industry had failed to examine the negative impact of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Philippine Greens secretary general Roberto Verzola ended his 22-day starvation on Wednesday to protest the entry of Bt corn in the country. American Peace Corp volunteer Andrew Haralam ended a parallel hunger strike here on Monday.

But the government, Magsaysay said, is already focused on reinforcing agricultural productivity using new technology to cushion the impact of globalization.

By 2004, most countries are obliged to lift all trade tariffs under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

In fact, he said, scientists at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños have been genetically modifying Philippine peanuts to accelerate the commodity's protein content.

Magsaysay said senators have suggested a strengthening of government financing, infrastructure and resources to build a parallel organics market.

Verzola had urged the Senate to legislate new laws obliging manufacturers to identify the GM components of food products.

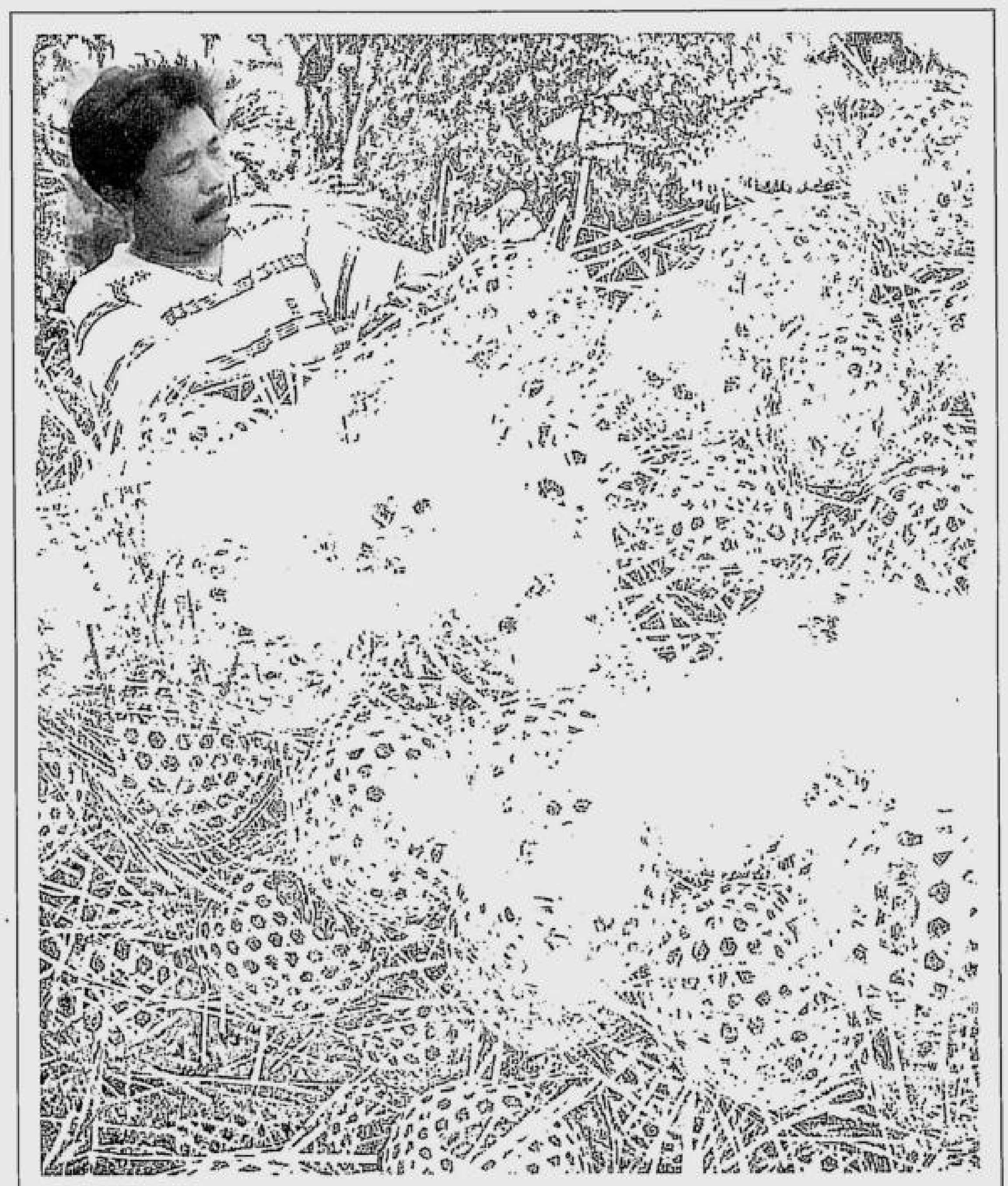
Magsaysay said establishing a new organics market may prove cheaper than obliging factories to label their products, because this will entail packaging changes from the product's overseas suppliers.

"Sen. Juan Flavier and I conducted a public hearing last time (on proposals to brand GMO products) and stakeholders showed us a huge expense list for branding. You will have to start with the supply chain, including distribution, warehousing and packaging," he said.

Magsaysay said the United States, the source of Bt corn, already offers naturalists a formula for battling GMOs.

He said strong consumer groups in the United States helped establish organics or natural food chains, although these businesses and supermarkets only eat up 20 to 25 percent of that country's food consumption.

He said the Philippines has a strong market for GM food. "There are GM eggs, which have a small cholesterol content. We look for that kind of food. I myself and (Land Bank of the Philippines president Margarito Teves) would not want to eat foods with high cholesterol," he said in Filipino. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



CRAB TRAPS

MELVIN GASCON/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A farmer makes the finishing touches to his *tallakeb* (crab traps) which will earn him some money for his family's food.

23 teachers suspended for rally vs principal

CABANATUAN CITY—For holding a prayer rally and noise barrage meant to oust their principal, 23 teachers of the Juan R. Liwag Memorial High School in the City of Gapan were ordered suspended for nine months.

The punishment was meted out by the Department of Education in Central Luzon, which heard the administrative case filed by Sofronio Lamson, then principal of the school, against the teachers.

The suspension order, approved by Regional Director Dinah Mindo, is expected to be implemented next month.

Ordered suspended were Emiliana Garcia, Emiliano David Jr., Teresita Adelante, Marlene Valmonte, Cecilia Cabrera, Josefina Clarin, Dolores Pascual, Rosemarie Santos, Felisa Villamor, Mercedita Angeles, Victoria Villamor, Corazon Tabayoyong, Pacita Pascual, Maribel Bio, Anatalia Gutierrez, Marilou Juan, Pedro Simbulan, Ma. Fe Jacinto, Ma. Cristina Linsangan, Imelda Quijano, Lena Aberin, Pastora Clarin and David David.

Case

Lamson filed the administrative case against the teachers who initiated a prayer rally and noise barrage on March 7 and 8, respectively, and organized the Resign Lamson Movement.

The protest actions, Lamson said, resulted in the disruption of classes.

The teachers said their protest actions were meant to voice out their grievances against Lamson. They claimed Lamson was "abusive, autocratic, corrupt and physically unfit to become a principal."

They also invoked their constitutional right to self-expression and academic freedom. They, however, waived their right to a formal investigation.

In holding the protests, the teachers deprived the students of educational services, the regional DepEd said in its ruling.

It also said the claim of teachers that they were just exercising their constitutional right to self-expression and academic freedom was "a misplaced application of the law."

Lamson said because of the protest actions of the teachers, he was placed in a bad light and made his work more difficult to the prejudice of the school. As a result, he said, he was forced to retire. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DUE TO SARS

Residents want 'balikbayan' ousted

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—About 20 families demanded the removal of a balikbayan from their barangay for fear she is infected with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus.

The residents of Barangay Candau-ay became wary after learning that the woman identified only as CT got sick with fever and coughs, symptoms of SARS, shortly after her arrival from South Korea.

It turned out that CT was suffering from bacterial pneumonia and asthma.

CT, 38, and married to a South Korean, arrived in Dumaguete last May 2 after staying in South Korea for five months.

Although she was from Barangay Magatas, Sibulan town, she decided to stay with her sister in Purok Likod, Candau-ay after she got sick with fever and severe coughs.

She first consulted a private physician before informing the local health authorities about her illness.

But her stay in Purok Likod did not sit well with the neighbors.

About 20 families trooped to their barangay chair, Segundina Dicen, last May 16 to express their strong objection to the continued stay of CT in Purok Likod.

They told Dicen to order CT to leave their village for fear they might fall ill of SARS.

But Dicen said she advised her constituents not to panic and wait for the report from health authorities who monitored CT's condition.

On Tuesday, CT was declared SARS-free by Dr. Virgilio Sienes, head of medical team tasked by the Provincial Health Office to check and monitor persons suspected to be suffering from the virus.

City Health Officer Erlinda Cabrera appealed to the people not to overreact to reports about SARS as these might just be rumors.

While it was understandable that the people would be worried, she said they should first verify the reports and learn more about SARS.

Cabrera said it was a pity that a person like CT was ostracized mainly because of a false alarm.

Fishermen hold picket vs Zambales fish cages

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Some 100 fishermen picketed the municipal hall of Sta. Cruz in Zambales on Thursday and demanded that the mayor make true her promise of dismantling two large fish cages at the Lucapon River there.

Eddie Elamparo, spokesperson of the Samahan ng Mangingisda sa Lucapon South, said the protest came after Mayor Consolacion Marty failed to implement her memorandum ordering the dismantling of the two remaining fish cages last May 19.

Elamparo, speaking to the INQUIRER by phone from Sta. Cruz, said the fish cages operated illegally because these had no permit from the municipal or barangay fisheries and aquatic resources management councils. *Bangus* (milkfish) are raised there.

"These fish cages have denied us fishing grounds. They also polluted our waters," he said.

Former Mayor Chito Marty, the husband of the mayor, said his wife could not unilaterally act on the demolition. He said the municipal government could be sued for damages. The operator was given until next week to empty the ponds of *bangus* fry.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources regional office here said there are 182 fish cages in those two towns. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Editor Jun Bandayrel
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Women paddlers 'hold up half the sky'

By Hazel P. Villa
Boracay Island

FOR TWO blistering days in April, one-fourth of the shoreline of the 7-km White Beach in Boracay was filled with tanned men, women and children with a passion for Dragon Boat racing.

But more than watching the 2nd Philippine International Dragon Boat Quest 2003, the crowd of old-timers and merely curious tourists came to see women "hold up half the sky," an oft-quoted feminist line which means women make up half of the population and should therefore be given equal rights with men.

"Hold up half the sky" was what the women paddlers of Boracay did when they fielded the only all-women team called the "Boracay Blades Women's Team" versus three teams of male paddlers in a tiring 4-km heat that saw the teams paddling non-stop for about 30 minutes from Station 2 to the end of White Beach and back.

The women—housewives, businesswomen, resort owners, teachers, musicians and mothers—also joined the men in the mixed team category to lend strong feminine determination and brawn to dominate the exciting Dragon Boat Quest on April 3-5 marked by "overtakes" and split-second differences in time.

Though the Boracay Blades Women's Team of 20 paddlers and two reserves finished last by a few seconds, they won the hearts of the loudly applauding beach crowd since it was said last year that the women were not going to stand up to the rigors under the relentless heat.

The other participating teams were the Boracay Sun Paddlers, Bugsay Boracay, Philippine Christian University Dolphins-St. Scholastica Dragon Boat Team and the Manila Paddlers.

'Mothers can . . .'

The Boracay Blades Women's Team won over the defending champion, the St. Scholastica-Philippine Christian University paddlers, in the women's category last year and remained to be the only women's team to join this year, forcing some of its paddlers to participate in the mixed category.

As one of the women participants proudly said, "The mothers of Boracay can beat the competition."

THE BORACAY Blades Women's Team all set to paddle in a practice session a day before the actual competition in the 2nd Philippine International Dragon Boat Quest 2003. HAZEL P. VILLA

The Philippine International Dragon Boat Quest 2003 had its first run last year in Boracay, a big change from Marikina River and the Manila Bay where dragon boat races are normally held.

"We like to have a Boracay-flavored Dragon Boat race. Our dream is to make this event popular though *mahirap ang* support (getting support is difficult)," said Lara Saguisag, event coordinator and herself an avowed paddler.

Lovell De Jesus Schoenenberger, 41, a Boracay native married to a Swiss and blessed with three teenage children joined the Boracay Blades Women's Team to add more variety to her usual aerobics and biking.

Like most of the Boracay women, Lovell, owner-manager of Lovell's Swiss Bakery at Station 2, said that aside from the intense physical activity the sport demands, it gave her an opportunity to bond with the other women in the island.

Elena Brugger, a native of Kalibo, Aklan, who is engaged in real estate and also married to a Swiss, said, "It's good to be in a team because of the cooperation and the camaraderie."

Elena, together with the other women paddlers and event coordinators Lara Saguisag and Jeff Galindez, looked for sponsors, which was not an easy thing to do since Dragon Boat was a relatively new event which needed a lot of drumming up.

However, they did get a major sponsor in Pioneer Epoxy that provided "high performance marine applications" for the fiberglass dragon boats that measured 11.6 meters (38 feet) long and 1.2 m (4 ft) wide.

Before the actual race, the women painted the boats and the buoys, an activity that knew no economic or racial bias.

Julia Lervik, owner of Balinghai Resort, painted the boats with other women paddlers, while Neta Golan Schwaitzer, a tourist, helped paint the buoys. Girlie Gasser, another Filipina married to a Swiss, painted the head and tail of the dragon decorations of the boat.

Husbands and kids, too

A constant source of amusement for the women is the fact that their husbands, children and their *yaya* (nannies) get infected with their passion for dragon boat racing that peaks in March and April when preparations get fever-high.

Husbands mill around while their wives practice everyday at 3 p.m. for three hours (except on Sunday) and the children are left to play near Bom Bom Bar at Station 2, the women paddlers' hang-out.

Students of Brent International School have gotten the hang of the sport, with Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2 pupils performing a dragon dance on the opening day of the Quest. The older students showed off their form in a dragon boat race exhibition, a culmination of several months of after-school practice.

Jeff Galindez, the brains behind the Philippine International Dragon Boat Quest, said the Boracay Blades Women's Team did well because of their camaraderie, while Saguisag attributed good performance to the women paddlers' "getting used to the movements of their team and 'mind over water.'"

Whatever makes the Boracay Blades Women's Team shine in the blue waters of the resplendent island, the women themselves have a hard time defining, but they are sure of one thing: they can hold up half the sky in Boracay.

Bankaw's legacy

VINTAGE VIEW
Rolando O. Borrinaga

LAST Black Saturday, the interior barangay of Camansi in Carigara, Leyte once again performed the centuries-old *turugpo* folk ritual, an annual festival of cockfighting, carabao fighting, horse fighting and gambling.

This once-obscure ritual was originally observed every Good Friday, the holiest day of Christendom, but it was moved to the next day sometime in the mid-1970s, in deference to an appeal from the bishop of Palo. At the time, it had become inevitable that, with the Department of Tourism's promotion and support, the event would become a national and international tourist attraction.

The folk ritual is an enduring legacy of the historic Bankaw Revolt.

History books cited Rajah Bankaw for his failed revolt in Carigara in 1621, the centennial of the Spanish contact.

The Bankaw Revolt was labeled as a religious uprising, with a gory tale about a beheaded native ruler and a chilling message implied by white men who carried a cross on one hand and a sword on the other, just in case things did not go their way.

But the accounts of the Bankaw Revolt bordered on fiction and seemed to have been quoted from an official cover-up report. The biographical "facts" posited were not borne out by source documents. The "blow-by-blow" story of the fighting between Bankaw and his warriors on one side, and a Spanish-Cebuano force on the other, did not seem to concur with folk memories.

Most books cited an erroneous item in history written by a Jesuit priest, Pedro Murillo Velarde, in 1749. The accounts had it that Bankaw feted the Legazpi expedition in Limasawa in 1565. He supposedly received royal thanks from King Philip II, through Legazpi, for the hospitality extended by the natives to the Spaniards since the time of Magellan in 1521.

But the chronicles of the Legazpi expedition did not mention any meeting between Legazpi and Bankaw. Legazpi's men landed on a depopulated island, recently raided by the Portuguese, when they dropped by Limasawa in 1565.

Bankaw was converted to Christianity and became loyal to Spain. But in his old age, he entertained the idea of returning to the religion of his forebears. He reportedly incited his people to rise in defense of their old gods and religion.

He was helped in his cause by his sons, particularly Pagali, who was described in history books as a native priest. Pagali was a "good student" of the Jesuits in the Dulag boarding school.

Bankaw's activities alarmed Jesuit Fr. Melchor de Vera, who hurried to Cebu and warned the authorities of the uprising. Alcalde Mayor Juan de Alcarazo sent a flotilla of 40 vessels, manned by Spanish soldiers and hundreds of Cebuano fighters, to Leyte.

The book accounts became semi-fictional again: "The rebels were offered peace, but they spurned the peace offer, and fled to their fortification in the hills. The Spanish-Filipino forces pursued them and defeated them in a decisive battle. The aged Bankaw perished in the fight, together with his first son and Pagali (Pagali was the first son); his second son was beheaded as a traitor; and his daughter was taken captive. Bankaw's head was severed from his body and placed on a stake and exhibited in public as punishment for his infidelity and apostasy."

However, the official report of the battle is not corroborated by local folklore, place-names, and rituals—now acceptable as legitimate sources of historical data.

Two barangays of Carigara named Hiraan (i.e., verbal altercation) instead suggest a rowdy public negotiation between Bankaw's camp and his armed visitors. The *hiraan* might have been held to negotiate Bankaw's return to the Catholic fold and might have been conducted with the presence of all members of Bankaw's family.

But the unwelcome guests seemed not interested in peace. Indeed, the Spaniards might have already decided to get rid of Bankaw and his family, having outlived their usefulness. And the Cebuano fighters, excited about the possibility of settling old scores with the Warays, probably came for war with some help from Spanish soldiers.

Thus, what seemed to have occurred during the *hiraan* was the massacre of Bankaw and his whole family. And the Spaniards reported an actual battle to hide their treachery.

But probably the most fitting legacy of Bankaw and his revolt is the name Leyte. The island was formerly known as Abuyo, before it became Ila-Iti.

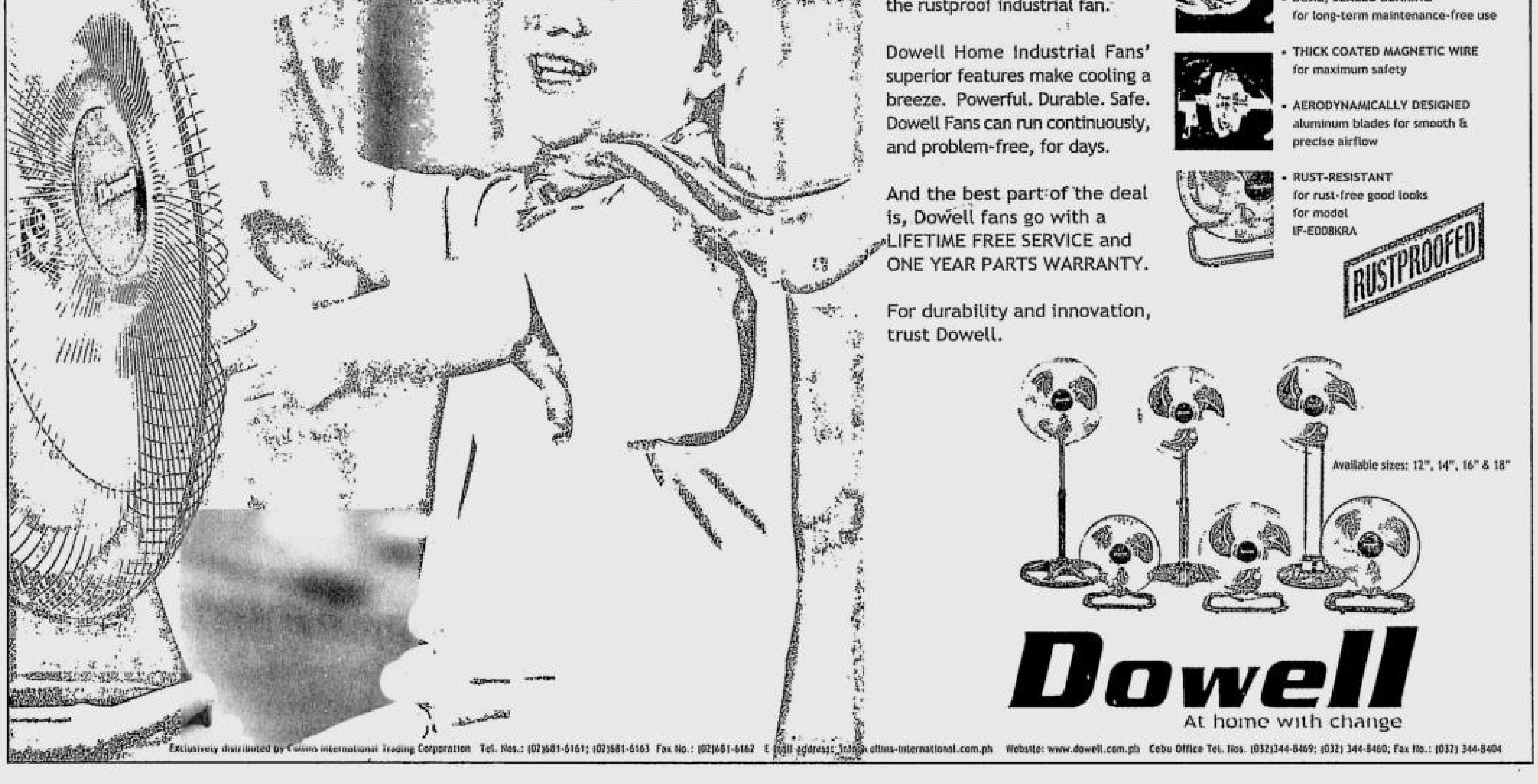
"*Ila*" is a possessive form in a collective sense, as "theirs" or "belonging to"; "Iti," the Good Boy, appears to have been the baptismal name of Bankaw. Thus, Ila-Iti means this place belonged to Iti and his family.

Centuries before Hollywood popularized the song "This Land is Mine," the theme of the movie "Exodus," the natives of this island had been shouting, "This is Iti's land!" with the vehemence of Moses.

In "Ila-Iti!," later corrupted as Leyte, they registered their continuing protest and resistance to the Spaniards for their ungrateful extermination of the "royal family" of Iti, the Rajah Bankaw of history, whose forebears and family extended acts of hospitality to the foreigners since the arrival of the Magellan expedition in 1521.

Sadly, the significance of the name Ila-Iti got lost and became forgotten with the passage of the centuries. It is actually time to feel the meaning of the word once again.

Unfortunately, unlike the title and message of a Salvador Dali painting, we lack or have lost "the persistence of memory."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'Don't steal the childhood of our youth'

By Julie S. Alipala
and Jeffrey P. Maningo
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—If teenagers in the country's cities flash their cell phones as a status symbol, minors in conflict-ridden rural areas brandish their firearms.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman noted the difference during the surrender rites for some 98 Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in Iligan City last Wednesday.

Soliman told the INQUIRER that more than half of those who surrendered with their firearms were teenagers.

"We are greatly apprehensive because rebels, regardless of organization, are stealing the childhood and future of our young generation," Soliman said.

She said more children might be joining the rebel groups because of various reasons, including poverty.

These reasons, Soliman said, have been very favorable to the rebel groups, particularly the MILF.

She also urged the rebel organization not to exploit the children's natural behavior of being easily attracted to guns.

"I'm appealing to them not to steal the childhood of our youth," Soliman said.

But the MILF said Soliman was barking up the wrong tree. Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said none of those who surrendered belonged to the rebel group.

He said the surrender was staged because some military commanders wanted to show they were in control of the situation in the Lanao provinces.

"They were former (Moro National Liberation Front) rebels handpicked by the military from the area so they could tell the government, 'Look, we have great accomplishments'," Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

He said some local officials, including Kalawi, Lanao del Sur Mayor Romeo Dipatuan, connived with the military in staging the surrender.

Commenting on the rocket-propelled grenade rifles (RPG) turned over by those who yielded, Kabalu said: "In Lanao del Sur, particularly in Tugaya, people could make everything imaginable. From money to firearms."

Tugaya, which is a few kilometers away from Marawi City, is known for its exquisite brassware.

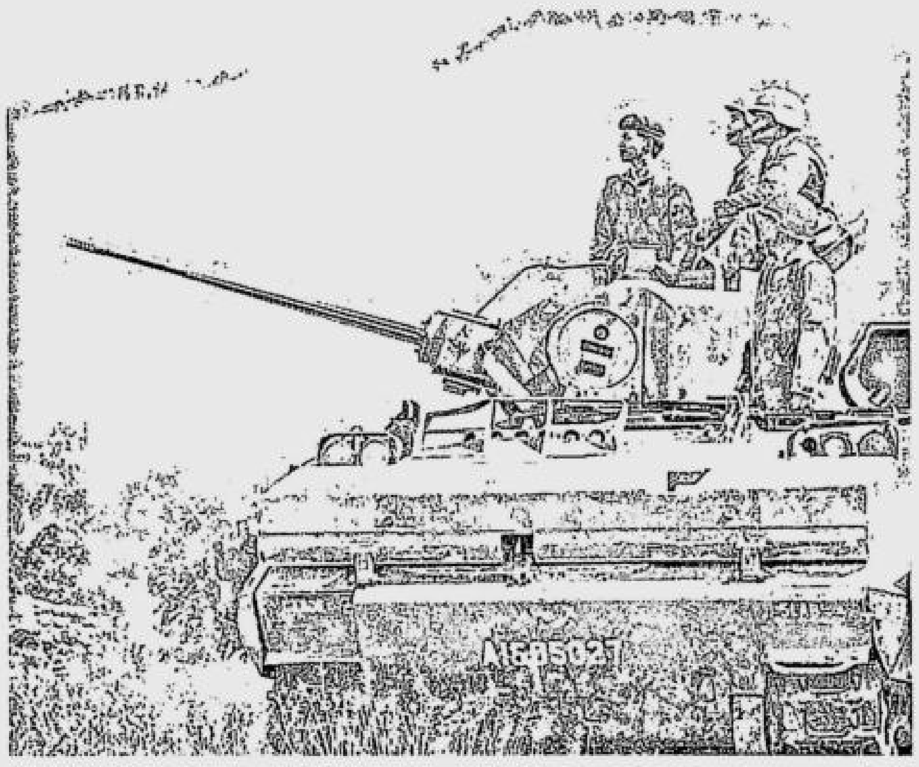
Another MILF leader, Commander Bravo of the rebel group's 501st Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) in the Lanao provinces, dismissed the alleged mass surrender.

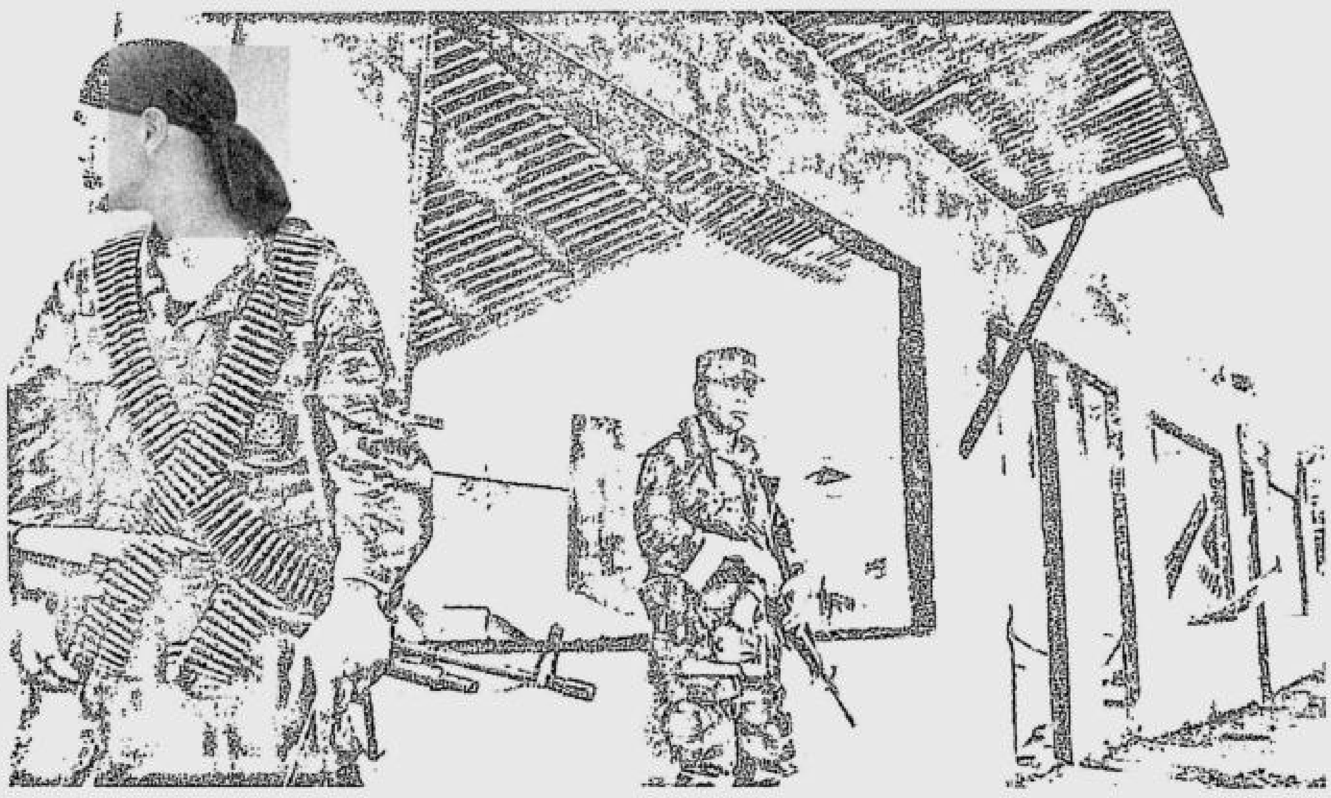
"The military gave them firearms and bribed them to present themselves as MILF rebels. The surrender was a big hoax," Bravo said.

CHILDREN of war are trapped inside an evacuation center in Munai, Lanao del Norte. This child with his father is waiting for his turn to get his share of food for the day.
PDI PHOTO/EDWIN BACASMAS

STOP THE WAR IN MINDANAO
NO TO US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE PHILIPPINES!
-UNIFIL
-APMM
-FMWU
FASCIST
PROTEST in Hong Kong from a group calling itself the United Filipinos in Hong Kong.
AFP

EDWIN BACASMAS
LIKE stray cats, they have become, these children displaced by the military's all-out attack on Muslim rebels.


ESCAPING MILF elements are hunted down by government troops.
EDWIN BACASMAS


THIS school in Munai, Lanao del Norte, was reportedly set on fire by MILF fighters before they fled to parts unknown.
EDWIN BACASMAS

RP asked to join...

From page A1

May 31.

Important partners

In his statement, Ople said:

"The Philippines has always given the utmost importance to its relationship with the members of the OIC. They have been important partners in pursuing global stability and growth, as well as in bringing peace and development to the Southern Philippines."

"Our participation in the coming OIC Ministerial Conference will give us a unique opportunity to strengthen our bonds with the Islamic countries, reinforce our efforts to bring peace to Southern Philippines and also represents an important milestone in our foreign policy," he said.

"We will continue to pursue greater cooperation and partnership with the members of the OIC, particularly on the common challenges that all countries face today," Ople said.

Ople had briefed OIC ambassadors to the country in the aftermath of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front raid on Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, and the bombing of Koronadal, South Cotabato.

"I asked the OIC ambassadors to use their moral suasion on our Muslim brothers to turn away from these acts of violence," he had said then.

Conflicting estimates

The diplomatic breakthrough came during a lull in the "selective" attacks on "embedded terrorist cells" that President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered a week ago, and on a day when the military and defense establishments gave wildly conflicting estimates of the number of casualties inflicted on government forces.

In a press briefing, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said 13 soldiers were killed while 22 others were wounded in one operation alone, the successful campaign to recover Munai town in Lanao del Norte on May 17.

But in the same briefing, Armed Forces Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Gàrcia, the AFP spokesperson, said the toll was much lower: "A total of eight AFP elements have been killed—this is up to May 17—and the wounded are 12."

"(In) the operations that the President had ordered which started May 17, we incurred a total of five wounded," he added.

Garcia, in the same forum, said that "unofficial reports" which he made public showed that 78 rebels were killed in the new offensive.

"There are five body counts as far as the MILF is concerned. But the total figure of casualties killed is 78 which was from May 17 onward," he maintained.

The figure was culled from statements and testimonies of their civilian informants, he said.

Defensive position

The MILF has claimed that its forces killed 28 soldiers and wounded 22 others.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told Agence France Presse the rebels remain in a "defensive position" amid a lull in the fighting.

But a senator from Mindanao said he believed the "selective" attacks were likely to end soon, now that they had accomplished their true mission: to impress US President George W. Bush that President Macapagal was tough on terror.

"The impression I think has been created on her visit to Bush," opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. told reporters.

Pimentel said he had a "sneaking suspicion" that these military offensives would "wind down" because the purpose for which the operations were launched had been accomplished.

Some MILF commanders are reportedly keen on laying down their arms but are having second thoughts for fear of reprisal, a police official said yesterday.

Deputy Director General Virtus Gil, deputy chief for operation and commander of the Task Force for Northeastern Mindanao, said that he has gotten calls from MILF commanders in Lanao del Sur and del Norte who voiced their desire to surrender.

"They are not being paid for their work and are left to fend for themselves in the jungles, always being pursued by the Armed Forces and getting hungry. That's why they wanted to surrender," he said.

"The others, however, are having second thoughts because if they surrender, they will be hunted down by the MILF rebels," Gil added.

Lanao mayors

Meeting in Munai last Thursday, the mayors of the two Lanao provinces said they backed the military's operation against "suspected terrorists" in their areas.

Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Roy Kyamko said the mayors also vowed to help in the campaign.

"They promised to inform the military in the area immediately if terrorists are sighted within their town. For those who have enough policemen, they promised to be the one to arrest those who are supposed to be arrested. I hope their commitment will be translated into action," Kyamko told reporters here.

In Malacañang, Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao warned that the MILF may be planning to bomb more public places.

"We have received intelligence reports that the MILF special operations group has distributed improvised bombs to their ordinary foot soldiers for detonation in certain areas of Mindanao," Tiglao said.

But Kabalu denied any such plans.

"That's an invention by the military. Part of psywar (psychological warfare). There is no truth in that. The MILF never engages in these kind of activities," he told Agence France Presse by telephone. *With reports from Martin Marfil, TJ Burgonio, Christine Avendaño; Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AFP*

Stigma is back, say Muslims in Metro

From page A1

Muslim leader said, after police rounded up 75 people in Manila, mostly Muslims.

Prof. Taha Basman, president of the Philippine Islamic Council, said yesterday taxi drivers have been avoiding his Maharlika community again, for fear the Muslim village sheltered terrorists.

Some Maharlika residents, in turn, have refused to go out of the village unless necessary to avoid hearing unsavory remarks from a suspicious public.

Residents also feel slighted when they see fully armed policemen detailed in the village, as if in anticipation of a full-scale terrorist attack.

"We know we're facing tough times these days," said another resident. "But they don't have to secure our place as if every single person who lives here is a terrorist."

Basman said the anti-Muslim stigma never really went away, but merely calmed by persistent appeals against unfounded public bias.

"We're practically immune to these things," he told the INQUIRER. "But some Muslims really can't help but be hurt by all these insults. How many times do we have to say that we're no terrorists?"

Go slow

Basman appealed to police to go slow on their saturation drives aimed at flushing out suspected terrorists in Metro Manila.

He fears Maharlika would end up as the next zoning target after the Manila raid, since the village is often perceived as haven for unscrupulous Muslims.

Village officials, he said, have formed their own task force, the Muslim Solidarity Assembly, to help the government in its campaign against terrorism.

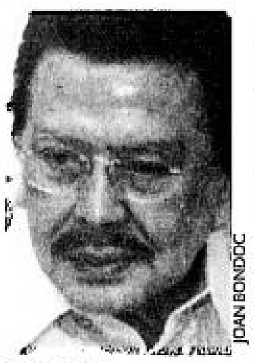
The group consists of Muslim lawyers, former military and police officials, and senior religious leaders in the village.

Its main task is to safeguard the rights of residents against abusive police and military raids, according to Basman.

The group also monitors new arrivals in the area.

Erap challenges GMA: Where's $4.5B from your previous US trip?

By Volt Contreras



ESTRADA

JOAN BONDOC

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada yesterday challenged his successor to show what had become of the supposed fruits of her previous trips to the United States.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo should do this before she could validly claim success for her just concluded state visit, in which she received praise from US President George W. Bush for her tough stance against terror.

"Like when she last claimed to have brought home around $4.5 billion in investments, where's that now?" Estrada said in Filipino in a press conference at the holding area of the Sandiganbayan following a hearing on his plunder case.

He was apparently referring to Ms Macapagal's working visit to the United States on Nov. 14-23, 2001.

Before leaving the US mainland for Mexico, she was quoted in reports as saying that the US military and economic package, investment commitments, and multilateral aid she had gathered for the Philippines then already amounted to $4.6 billion.

The President also visited the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States on Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 2002. The three-nation tour supposedly bagged the Philippines up to $1.2 billion in investment commitments.

Asked yesterday how he found the President's latest trip, Estrada said: "According to the media, especially her controlled media, she did well and good. But I hope she was able to get something for all her efforts as part of the [antiterror] coalition of the willing."

Asked if he would congratulate Ms Macapagal for a successful trip, he responded in Taglish: "Why not, if she really brought something home for the people—which I have yet to see."

But he expressed doubt that the US trip had done wonders for the image of Ms Macapagal, whose authority he continues to dispute.

A TV reporter asked him in Filipino if he saw Ms Macapagal's popularity to be *sumisikat* (on the rise) because of the trip.

"*Ang alam ko, araw lang ang sumisikat* (As far as I know, only the sun rises and shines)," he said, drawing chuckles from some reporters.

GMA cuts US trip, goes to Mindanao

From page A1

check on the crime situation in Mindanao.

She is expected to announce that the "selective aerial and artillery attacks" that she ordered last week against "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao had been successful.

Tiglao said the President would call off the military operations "once there is a very clear sign these terrorists had dispersed."

He said Ms Macapagal was also waiting for the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, "which seems to have within them embedded terrorist cells, to publicly announce that they are not coddling terrorists and are willing to go back to the peace negotiation table."

Tiglao, however, said that according to military intelligence reports, the MILF was planning more bomb attacks in Mindanao.

He said the intelligence reports indicated that the MILF Special Operations Group had distributed "improvised bombs to ordinary foot soldiers" because MILF forces were now on the run from government troops.

"We hope they are brave enough to face our soldiers in the field rather than detonate bombs in markets and even in schools," he said.

Here and there

From Cagayan de Oro, the President will fly to Tubod, Lanao del Norte, to check on development projects, Tiglao said.

The next day will find her in Davao City, where she will meet with Mindanao officials to check on economic projects and the antiterrorism campaign.

Tiglao said the President would make state visits to South Korea and Japan on June 2-6, and then return to Mindanao for a longer stay.

She is expected to stay in Mindanao from June 10 to 17.

The President left for the United States on May 17. Her first state visit there has been hailed as a success based on the all-praise reception that she got from US President George W. Bush.

The visit was marked by a pledge from Bush to make the Philippines a major non-North Atlantic Treaty organization ally, like Israel and Australia.

It also generated about $4 billion worth of defense and trade assistance and other projects, according to the latest announcement from Malacañang.

Lift travel bans, KL asks Asean

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia yesterday pressed the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to lift travel restrictions in a bid to promote inter-Asean travel and put the struggling SARS-hit tourism industry back on track.

"SARS has made us suffer so much. Even if we can overcome the outbreak in the next one or two months, it will take a few more months for confidence to travel to return," Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, Malaysia's culture, arts and tourism minister said.

"This time Asean countries need to find a meaningful way to cooperate. We need to tap the region's 500 million population. We should remove travel restrictions and cut red-tape," Abdul Kadir said during the opening of the Asean National Tourism Organization's meeting.

Abdul Kadir lamented that numerous Asean resolutions to promote inter-regional travel have been made in the past but had not been followed through.

"We have been making so many resolutions about intra-Asean travel but unfortunately, we have not been making any headway. I think all of us must be blamed," he said.

The meeting, grouping government officials and the private sector, is evaluating the impact of SARS on the industry and seeking ways to overcome the crisis.

Don't be selfish

Abdul Kadir urged Indonesia, the Philippines and Burma, in particular, to lift their travel restrictions.

"We should consider travel within Asean as part of domestic travel. I think we should not be selfish and encourage our people to travel to other Asean countries," he said.

Asean groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Tran Duc Minh, deputy secretary general of the Jakarta-based Asean secretariat on tourism, said the industry in Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam has been severely hit by SARS.

"There is an urgent need to promote intra-Asean travel to restore the industry. The removal of travel restrictions can spur travel," he said.

Argus Salim Abdul Razak, president of the Asean Tourism Association, said the group was working with the various governments to find ways to encourage travel.

"The need is clear. We need to sustain travel. We are looking at air and hotel discounts and other attractive packages for tourists to travel within Asean," he said. *AFP*

It's official: Finn not a SARS case

HELSINKI—A second test failed to confirm that a young Finnish man, who recently visited the Philippines, had contracted SARS, officials said yesterday.

"All the tests that we have gotten the results from are negative," said Jussi Maennistoe, chief physician in the respiratory department of Kotka Central Hospital.

"The patient is quite well, all the quarantine procedures have been stopped and he was discharged yesterday," he added.

According to World Health Organization guidelines, two positive test results are needed to confirm a SARS case.

Following the latest tests and discussions with WHO personnel, the patient is no longer classified as a probable or possible SARS case, Maennistoe said.

The 27-year-old Finn fell ill hours after returning from a long stay in the Philippines, and was put in quarantine upon seeking medical help in his hometown of Kotka, 120 km east of Helsinki. *AFP*

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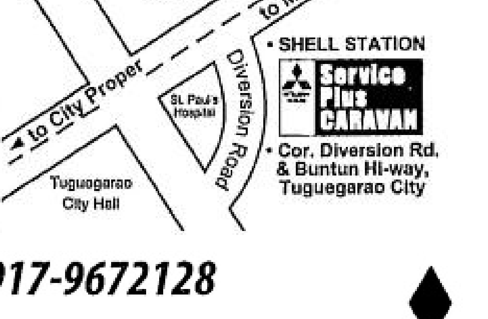

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Cory sends Erap a gift: Ninoy's book

From page A1

In a press conference after the hearing, Estrada held up "Testament" for the cameras and said it was "a source of inspiration" that had brought him "closer to God."

Estrada drew "parallels" between himself and Ninoy, saying that the assassinated opposition leader "did not trust the military tribunal" that was then trying him, "while I don't trust the Supreme Court justices because of their conspiracy with the lawyers" of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

For good measure, the former matinee idol gave a twist to the famous Ninoy quote: "If he said 'The Filipino is worth dying for,' I will paraphrase it as 'The rule of law is worth fighting for.'"

Estrada said Aquino sent him the book through Philip Juico, who served as her agrarian reform secretary. He said Aquino might have heard from his former finance secretary, Jose "Titoy" Pardo, that he had been depressed lately.

HOLDING court during a press conference after the Sandigan hearing, Estrada is flanked by lawyers Alan Paguia (right) and Prospero Crescini and fortified by Ninoy's book. JOAN BONDOC

Thoughtful gesture

According to Siytangco, former President Aquino had been planning to send the book even before Juico's visit because "she realized that while Ninoy was in jail, he welcomed visitors" and little gestures of thoughtfulness.

Estrada quoted Aquino's dedication thus: "To President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, with my prayers and good wishes."

He said Aquino's note referred him to Page 136, which contained Ninoy's letter to then Sen. Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo.

Rodrigo's letter had tried to console and counsel the incarcerated Ninoy saying in part that God may have wanted him in jail for him to realize that when things were going well for him, he had forgotten the Lord.

He said he was "grateful" to Aquino for her gift, but became rather evasive when asked how he would reconcile her gesture with the leading role she played in the January 2001 uprising that removed him from office.

At the hearing, Estrada told the justices that his recent motion seeking the dismissal of his plunder and other criminal cases was a "reiteration" of his long-held position of not recognizing the Sandiganbayan.

'Still President'

"I'm sorry I don't recognize the jurisdiction of this court over my cases because I'm still the President and therefore immune from suit," said Estrada, who was wearing his trademark white wristband with the presidential seal.

The 1987 Constitution says sitting presidents cannot be put on trial until after they finish their six-year term.

Seen by the prosecution as another delaying tactic and a sign that Estrada's court-appointed lawyers were hard put to prepare his defense, the hearing also marked the debut of his newly hired lawyer Alan Paguia in the two-year-old trial.

Paguia said his client's May 19 motion to dismiss was intended to cite, not an "error in judgment" on the part of the Supreme Court when it legitimized the Macapagal-Arroyo presidency in a March 2001 decision, but an earlier "error in jurisdiction."

He argued that:

- By being at the Edsa Shrine to administer the oath of office to then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo to be Estrada's successor, the justices led by Chief Justice Hilario Davide "prejudged" the issue of legitimacy.
- By taking part in the "partisan political activity" then taking place at the shrine, the justices violated the Rules of Judicial Conduct and were "ousted of their jurisdiction" over the matter.

Paguia also said the tribunal's deliberations on Estrada vs Macapagal-Arroyo were a "mere charade."

Presidency 'at stake'

Sandiganbayan Justice Edilberto Sandoval wondered aloud through a series of questions if Paguia expected the anti-graft court to disregard a decision of the tribunal, and the tribunal to reverse itself should Estrada's latest motion be elevated to it.

Sandoval also noted that Estrada himself "invoked the Supreme Court's jurisdiction" when he formally challenged the authority of his successor.

"Now that the Supreme Court has dismissed [Estrada's challenge], you're telling us that the Supreme Court should not have done that?" he asked the lawyer.

To which Paguia replied: "What is at stake here is not the person of Joseph Estrada but the presidency."

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio dismissed Paguia's pleading as a "sham and improper motion" and moved to have it struck from the record.

He said that contrary to what Paguia had wanted to impress on the Sandiganbayan, "all these issues have already been resolved and set aside" by the tribunal.

"It raises the same arguments and it's too late in the day for the defense to do that," Villa-Ignacio said. "They just want to delay the proceedings because they are not prepared to present their defense."

Indeed, delay appeared to be the net result of yesterday's hearing.

Defense resumes June 16

In view of the new motion that came on top of other unresolved pleadings, the court moved from June 2 to 16 the resumption of Estrada's trial—the supposed Day One of his defense.

Other pending matters for resolution include the motion to travel by Estrada's son and co-accused Jinggoy Estrada; the defense asking the court to cite former Senior State Prosecutor Alex Padilla in contempt; and another defense motion asking prosecutors to specify purposes in their formal offer of exhibits.

Surrounded by his lawyers and opposition politicians, Estrada would not say that he expected to be reinstated. But he said that if he returned to the presidency, he would crack down on corruption, particularly in the judiciary.

After the proceedings, Estrada was whisked back amid tight security to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, whose presidential suite has been serving as his detention quarters for about two years.

With an AFP report

STOP SARS ATTACK

DOH OFFICIAL ADVISORY

SATURDAY 24 May 2003

BUILD YOUR BODY'S RESISTANCE AGAINST SARS — DOH

One of the ways to avoid getting SARS, or other common diseases for that matter, is by practicing a healthy lifestyle to build the body's resistance. You can do this by having regular exercise, adequate sleep, eating a balanced diet, taking adequate fluids and avoiding smoking.

Aside from building the body's immunity against ordinary diseases, you can also avoid SARS by practicing personal hygiene, washing one's hands frequently, covering one's mouth when sneezing and coughing. When your resistance is low or when you are sick of other illnesses, you should avoid crowded places.

Question.

I came from Singapore and I cannot postpone my scheduled vacation here because I want to see my kids properly enrolled this schoolyear. But it is quite a lonely homecoming this time around because of the threat of SARS. I know I don't have the disease, but if I were exposed to SARS, how long would it take for me to become sick?

Answer.

SARS incubation period (the time between the infection sets in to the time the signs and symptoms come out) is typically 2 to 7 days. However, isolated reports have suggested an incubation period as long as 10 days.

The illness usually begins with a fever (measured temperature more than 38.0°C). The fever is sometimes associated with chills or other symptoms, including headache, general feeling of discomfort and body aches. Some people also experience mild respiratory symptoms at the outset. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop dry cough that might be accompanied by or progress to the point where insufficient oxygen is getting to the blood. In 10 percent to 20 percent of cases, patients will require mechanical ventilation.

Reported SARS cases in the Country
(March 17 - May 23, 2003)

SARS suspects:	
total cumulative admission	84
total discharged	83
presently admitted (May 23, 2003)	1
SARS cases	12
SARS deaths	2
SARS Recovered/Cured	10

SARS HOTLINES: 741-7048 / 743-1937 or Type MED<space>SARS then send to 2333 for Globe subscribers or 257 for Smart users or text HOTLINE SARS <space> (Message) then send to 2960 or EMAIL: sars@doh.gov.ph

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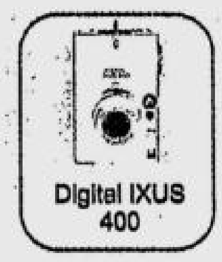

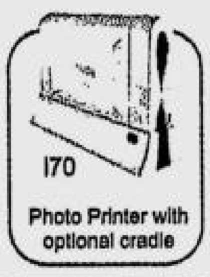

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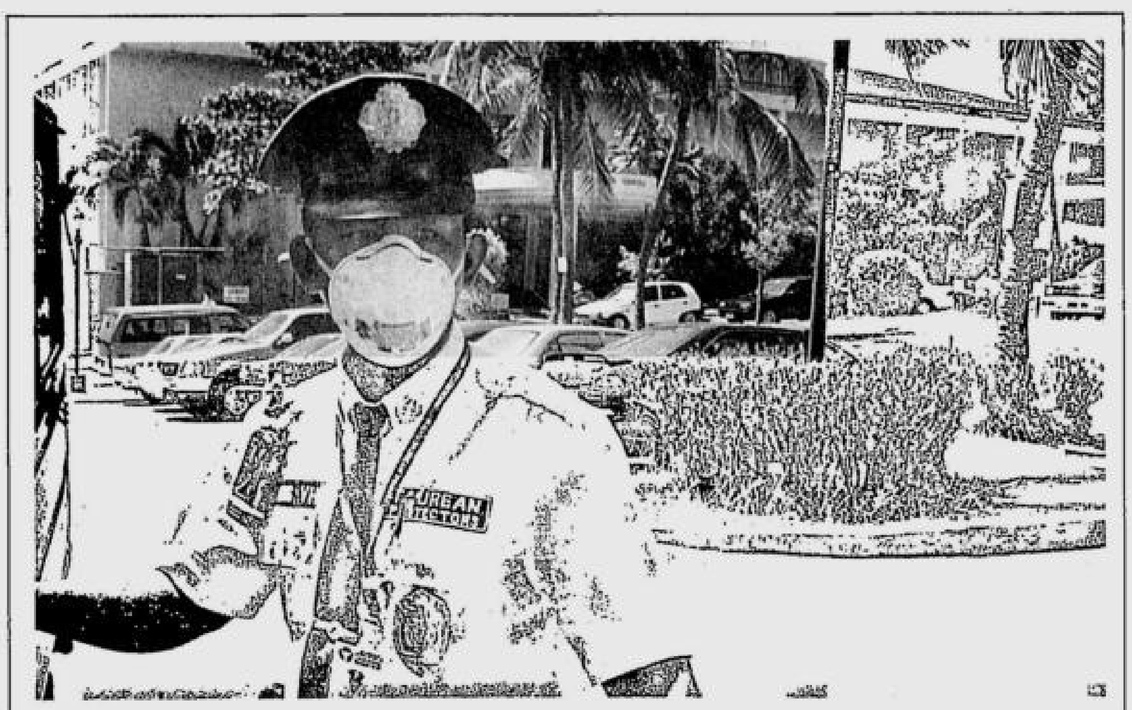
WHO lifts travel advisories to HK, Guangdong



ALL'S well again at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine in Alabang after the Philippines was removed from the list of SARS-affected countries by the WHO. JOAN BONDOC

From page A1

the civet cats. Civet cats are not true cats, but short-haired mammals with long bodies, short legs and tails. They resemble small raccoons or weasels.

"Looking at the genetic information, it is highly likely that the virus has been jumping from the civets to humans," Dr. Yuen Kwok-yung told a news conference, adding that the cats should be handled and sold under careful monitoring to avoid further outbreaks.

The researchers had previously said SARS had come from animals but they were not sure which kind. They said they could not rule out the possibility that the civets had been infected by other animals, or vice versa, as the disease spread.

$200-M fund

The WHO says it is seeking $200 million to launch a fund to help Asian nations combat SARS through medical surveillance and analysis.

It also updated its statistics on the number of people who are believed to have contracted SARS on an airplane from 16 to 27, following the receipt of more complete information.

"One flight alone, Air China 112, which flew from Hong Kong to Beijing on March 15, is now known to have accounted for 22 of the 27 cases," WHO said in a statement. Two were flight attendants and 20 were passengers.

SKINNED civet cats AFP

With things returning to normal in China's capital, students are starting to go back to public schools closed at the height of Beijing's SARS crisis.

Kids chilled

Students who gather for university entrance tests next month will have to undergo medical checkups to confirm they are free of SARS, a state newspaper said Friday.

Beijing has nearly 2,500 cases of SARS — about half the total on China's mainland, where more than 300 people have died.

In Singapore, a newspaper reported that some parents were keeping their children chilled with ice water and air conditioning before classes so they wouldn't be sent home with suspected fevers as part of anti-SARS measures. *AP*

Did SARS virus come from outer space?

From page A1

in which a tethered, sterile balloon collected samples from the stratosphere.

"Large quantities of viable micro-organisms" were captured at an altitude of 41,000 meters, they say.

Translated for the globe, that means "a ton of bacterial material falls to Earth from space daily," the trio say.

The sheer volume of this stream of micro-organisms raises the possibility that some of them will survive and a few may prove to be bacteria or viruses that are dangerous for humans, they contend.

"The annals of medical history detail many examples of plagues and pestilences that can be attributed to space incident microbes in this way.

Abrupt entrances

"New epidemic diseases have a record of abrupt entrances from time to time, and equally abrupt retreats." The letter says that the great flu pandemic of 1918-19, which killed tens of millions of people, may have been just such an example of a disease sown from space.

Epidemiologists have always been intrigued about how this pathogen spread so quickly and infiltrated remote communities, at a time when there was no jet travel, and also how it disappeared so abruptly.

In the case of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), the letter makes a "prima facie" argument that a small amount of the virus may have entered the atmosphere east of the Himalayas, where the stratosphere is thinnest, and was deposited in southern China.

"All reasonable attempts" should be made to halt the disease's infective spread, it says.

But in the longer term, SARS will continue, and cases of it will pop up almost anywhere on the planet, "until the stratospheric supply of the causative agent becomes exhausted," it contends.

The letter is written by Chandra Wickramasinghe of Cardiff University's Center for Astrobiology; Milton Wainwright of Sheffield University's Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology; and Jayant Narlikar of the Inter-University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics in Pune, India.

'Pan-spermia'

Many astrobiologists contend that life on Earth is not an enclosed evolutionary kettle, but a biosphere that has been influenced by arrivals from space.

One theory, called "pan-spermia," suggests that life on Earth was kickstarted by bugs or constituent chemicals which hitchhiked a ride on an asteroid or comet that collided with the planet.

The idea, initially ridiculed, is now taken seriously, although the "disease-from-space" idea is still very marginal.

The mainstream medical theory about the SARS virus is that it is an animal virus that mutated and leapt the species barrier. It crossed from farm animals to man, most probably in Guangdong, southern China, last year.

"I think it is a possibility that SARS came from space. It is a very strong possibility," Wickramasinghe told Reuters.

The director of the Cardiff Center for Astrobiology in Wales and a proponent of the theory that life on Earth originated from space, admits the theory defies conventional wisdom.

'Completely nuts'

In their letter to the The Lancet, he and his colleagues argue there are too many puzzling aspects about the respiratory illness that has killed nearly 700 people and infected more than 3,800 to dismiss the idea.

Other virologists believe it simply isn't possible because the virus is too fragile to survive in outer space.

"I think it is completely nuts," said Dr. Anne Bridgen, a molecular virologist at the University of Ulster.

"It has a lipid (fatty) coat on the outside and it would tend to dry out in an atmosphere such as space," she told Reuters.

Prof. Ian Jones, an expert in virology at the University of Reading in southern England, described the idea as bizarre.

"SARS is a new virus but it is only a new relative of a family of viruses that we understand quite well," he said, referring to the coronavirus family which includes a virus linked to the common cold.

"The difference is that it is causing a severity of disease that we haven't seen before in the human population."

A lot of debate

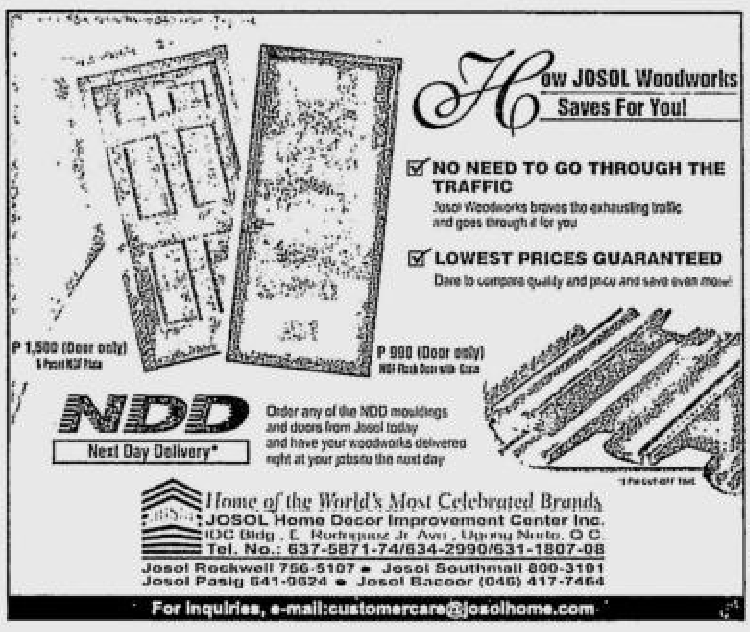
Wickramasinghe stressed that SARS suddenly appeared in China late last year and is a new coronavirus with a different genetic sequence from similar viruses in animals. Its origin has also not been traced. He believes these factors could suggest it evolved differently and may have come from a far-off place.

"There doesn't seem to have been a human origin for this. It seems to have come from somewhere else," said Wainwright, a molecular biologist at the University of Sheffield in England and a co-author of the letter.

"There is a lot of debate about where it could have come from and we are providing an answer," he added.

Wickramasinghe and Wainwright believe the original outbreak in China is also significant because if the virus did fall to Earth it would most likely land east of the Himalayas, the weakest point in the stratosphere and easiest to break through.

"The fact that many cases in China cannot be traced to infected people means that something is dreadfully amiss in the idea of conventional wisdom," he said. *AFP*



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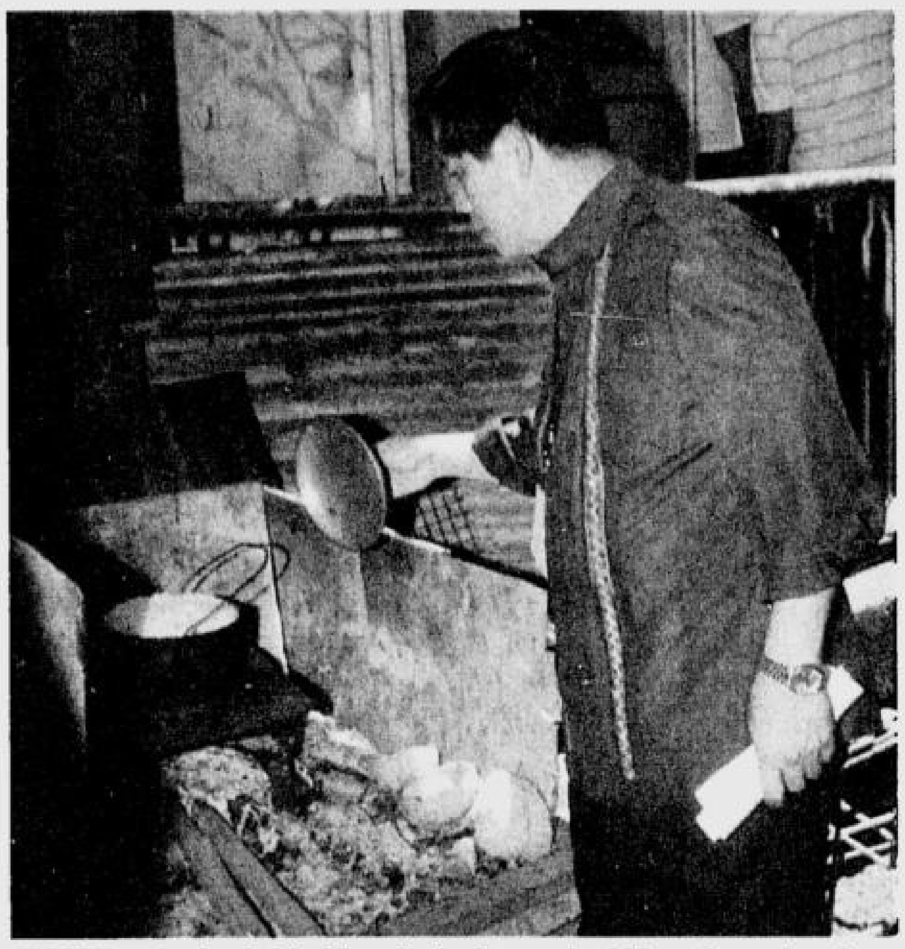
Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Cops bust kidnap gang, rescue woman hostage



ANGEL Atutubo, head of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's security unit, inspects the uneaten food contained in a pot at the kidnappers' lair in Nayong Pilipino, hours after police rescued a woman hostage at the site. ROGER MARGALLO

By TJ Burgonio

POLICE arrested eight suspected kidnappers, including two former policemen, and rescued their hostage, a Chinese-Filipino businesswoman whom they allegedly abducted on May 8.

Police and military men on Thursday rescued Benilda Ho, 43, during a raid on the kidnappers' safehouses in Kamias, Quezon City and Almanza I, Las Piñas City.

Before her rescue, Ho's family reportedly paid the kidnappers P224,500 in ransom.

The authorities identified five of the arrested suspects as John Galicia, 40, Napoleon Portugal, 48, Amelito Billones, 38, Roger Demetilla, 39, and Leo Geneto.

In a follow-up operation yesterday at the Nayong Pilipino in Pasay City, the authorities arrested retired Insp. Carlito Ugat, suspected leader of the gang, discharged SPO1 Elisio Villarino and Roger Chua.

Senior Supt. Alan Purisima, head of the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) unit, said that Ugat's gang is a breakaway group of the Leyte-Iloilo kidnap for ransom syndicate, one of 14 groups on their watchlist.

"Apparently, they (suspected kidnappers) wanted to make their own money, too," Purisima said.

Ho, who owns a dressmaking shop, and her driver were snatched by armed men at the corner of Quezon and Araneta avenues on the night of May 8, police said. The driver was later released.

Ho was the fourth person to be kidnapped this month, according to Purisima.

Her kidnappers initially demanded P50 million in ransom from her family, but after negotiations, they later agreed to turn the victim over for P224,500.

But even after the businesswoman's family handed over the ransom, the suspects still refused to release her, the police said.

The kidnappers reportedly demanded more money.

Ho was "in good condition" when she was rescued by members of the Pacer unit, Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, AFP Anti-Crime Task Force and Central Police District, according to Purisima.

Teresita Ang-See of the group Citizens Action Against Crime had earlier complained about the rise of kidnapping incidents in Metro Manila, involving Chinese-Filipinos.

Stung by the report, police officials disputed Ang-See's claims, saying that the 29 incidents reported as of May 14 were three percent lower than last year's record of 30 incidents.

With a report from AFP.

Ex-MNLF man hunted down for killing kin

By Alcuin Papa

A FORMER member of the Moro National Liberation Front allegedly killed his sister-in-law in Quezon City Thursday night.

Police are now looking for suspect Makmud Jakarnain, of Al Salam Street, Barangay Culiat, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Based on a Central Police District report, Jakarnain stabbed his sister-in-law Aleha Salyaw, 34, several times at around 11:30 p.m. inside the Muslim Compound in Culiat.

Police said the suspect was drunk when he arrived home and started arguing with the victim. During the argument, the suspect lost his temper, pulled out a bladed weapon and stabbed Salyaw.

Police learned from residents in Culiat that Jakarnain had allegedly killed about 17 people, but had managed to avoid arrest. Police said the suspect was drunk on each occasion.

Whistleblower in terror case gets death threats

By Jerome Aning

WESTERN Police District officials have taken into custody the witness who had identified the seven suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front members arrested last Wednesday.

A police official, who asked not to be named, said the witness has been receiving death threats following the disclosure.

The witness said suspects Jimmy Salik, 27, Romeo Romo, 39, Ricky Mendoza, 26, Abdulwahid Mamuro, 48, Alejandro Ignacio, Alfred Abay-Abay and Abdulbasit Malacaw were terrorists out to wage a bombing campaign in Metro Manila.

The seven men are facing charges of illegal possession of explosives.

Police arrested the suspects during a saturation drive at Isla Puting Bato in Tondo.

The suspects, who have undergone tactical interrogation, are being represented by lawyers from the Public Attorney's Office (PAO).

PAO lawyer Persida Rueda-Acosta said she and her colleagues would "seriously examine the legal bases of the police case against the suspects."

According to Rueda-Acosta, they are still gathering testimony to prove claims of the suspects' relatives that the seven men were framed and that the pieces of evidence against them were planted.

The police official said the statement of the witness, a male member of the Muslim community, is "very vital" to the case since it was he who convinced the court to issue a search warrant.

"The witness positively identified (the suspects) as MILF members during a confrontation at WPD headquarters," the police source explained. "Without the witness' help, the raid would not have taken place at all."

The official refused to identify the witness. The source only described the witness as a former MILF member who decided to flee to Manila, away from the horrors of war in Mindanao.

The witness eventually became "friendly" with government forces and later obtained a connection with the WPD's District Intelligence and Investigation Division, the source said.

The WPD decided to take the witness into custody after the latter received reprisal threats on his mobile phone for the past 48 hours.

The source said killing the witness would have no bearing on the case because the latter, as precaution, has executed a sworn statement.

WPD members rounded up at least 75 suspected MILF members and sympathizers during the raid in Tondo. Three others escaped by jumping into Manila Bay while the raid was taking place.

Of the 75, seven were identified as MILF members and charged. Recovered from the suspects were about four kilos of ammonium nitrate, a bomb-making ingredient and non-electric blasting caps.

The raid took place after military officials aired an alert of possible retaliatory attacks by the MILF in the metropolis following the launch of punitive operations in Mindanao last weekend.

LATE SPORTS

PBA: Torion et al. could be charged

GAMES TOMORROW
(Araneta Coliseum)
4 p.m.—Purefoods vs Alaska
6:30 p.m.—Shell vs Ginebra

By June Navarro

DRUG offenders in the PBA could be held liable separately under the country's anti-drug law, league technical chief Perry Martinez said yesterday.

Martinez clarified that, apart from the sanctions imposed on them by the PBA, Red Bull's Jimwell Torion, Alex Crisano of Barangay Ginebra, Norman Gonzales of Talk N Text, San Miguel Beer's Dorian Peña and Asi Taulava of Talk N Text could be penalized under the law.

He said the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, the government monitoring body on drug abuse, has the right to enforce the anti-drug law with the PBA adopting a hands-off policy the moment the PDEA steps in.

Torion and Crisano tested positive for shabu while Gonzales was diagnosed for Ecstasy. They were suspended by the league indefinitely.

Peña and Taulava, on the other hand, were suspended for two games at the beginning of the conference after traces of marijuana were found on their urine samples.

As ordered by PBA Commissioner Noli Eala, Torion and Crisano are presently undergoing rehabilitation.

Torion said he is determined to come back and regain the trust of the public.

"Basketball is my way of life," said Torion.

Despite the progress being made by Torion, Eala said the Red Bull playmaker will remain suspended indefinitely.

"The lifting of the suspension depends on Torion's behavior," Eala said.

Meanwhile, San Miguel Beer rained triples as it plastered FedEx Express, 88-79, last night in the Samsung PBA All Filipino Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

In the second game, Coca Cola downed Sta. Lucia Realty, 98-76 to snare the fifth slot in the coming Asian Invitationals.

Dondon Hontiveros buried two treys and Joey Mente added another in the closing minutes as the Beermen went on to avenge 91-81 setback against the Express in their last encounter.

The Beermen thus stretched their win streak to six games and grabbed the solo leadership in Group A with an 11-6 record while halting the Express' five-game run that had the Bert Lina-owned squad dropping to 10-7.

Bar owner accuses 3 lawmen of extortion

By Jerome Aning

THE OWNER of a Malate bar yesterday accused two Manila policemen and their companion of extorting about P10,000 monthly from him to spare his establishment from raids.

Complainant Enrico Espinosa, owner of the Eros Bar on Adriatico Street identified the suspects as PO3 Larry Javier, SPO1 Robert Chua and Teddy Remandaban.

Javier and Chua are members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group's Manila Office. Remandaban is a member of the People's Law Enforcement Board, which hears administrative cases against erring lawmen.

In his complaint, Espinosa said the suspects collect P9,500 a week from him.

He quoted the suspects as saying that the money was in support of intelligence operations of the GAS, WPD-District Intelligence and Investigation Division and the Office of the District Director.

WPD officials have asked Javier, Chua and Remandaban to answer Espinosa's complaint.

Hawkers are in for more heartaches

THE METRO Council has unanimously approved a regulation banning business and commercial establishments from protecting illegal vendors who occupy the space in front of their premises.

The MMC has also passed a resolution urging local government units to penalize those who buy from the illegal vendors.

Noting that illegal vendors are usually shielded by business owners "especially during operations on illegal obstructions," the MMC found it necessary to penalize such business owners.

Those found guilty of protecting illegal vendors would be fined P1,000 per offense.

The regulation defines protection of vendors as any act that would let them hide or operate within their premises during sidewalk clearing operations.

The establishments banned from doing this include government or private offices, schools, hospitals, churches, theaters, restaurants and department stores.

The resolution boosts the MMDA's sidewalk clearing campaign, which aims to remove all obstructions that block traffic flow and limit the sidewalk space intended for pedestrians.

Leila Salaverria

Urban poor bear brunt of Metro council's anti-vendor measures, militants claim

By Leila Salaverria

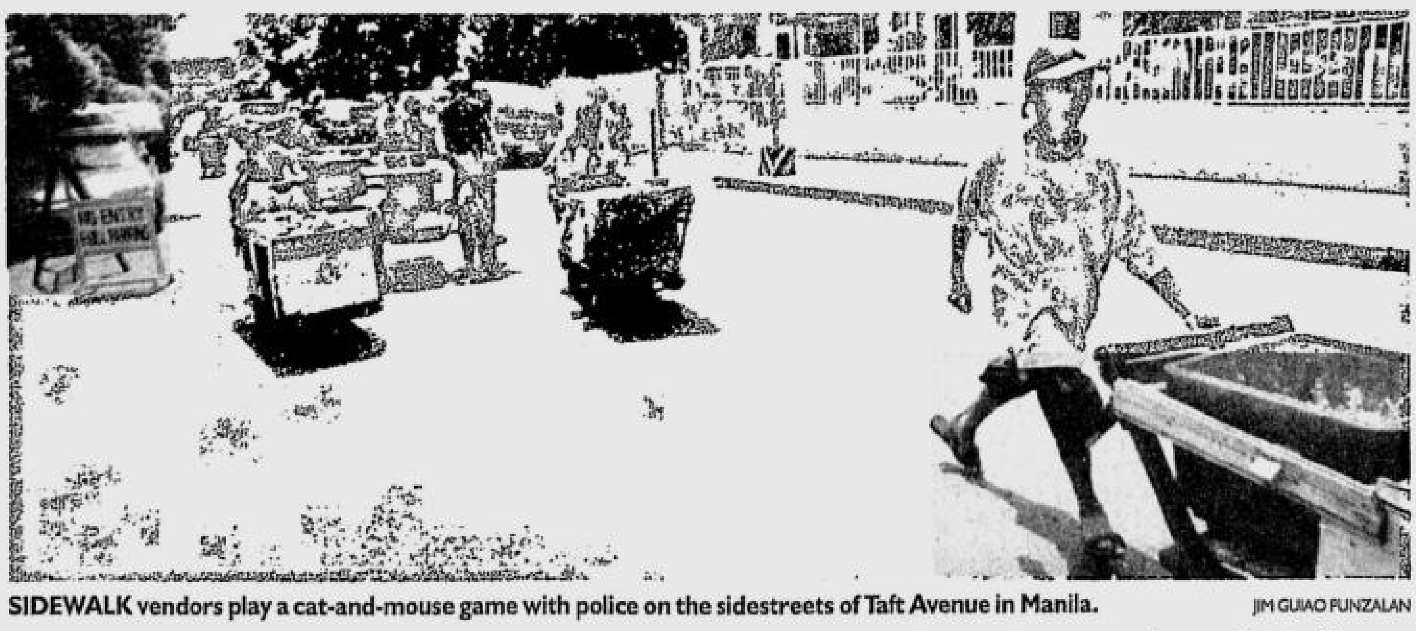
IF they don't want people buying from sidewalk vendors, then they should just apprehend all the poor people in Metro Manila.

The militant group Sanlakas made this statement yesterday as it criticized the Metro Manila Council's "ruthless" plan to penalize those who patronize sidewalk vendors.

According to Don Pangan, Sanlakas information officer, as long as there are poor people in the metropolis, sidewalk vendors will still have supporters.

"The goods of the vendors are all that the poor could afford," he said. "As long as there is demand for the vendors' wares, as long as there are no alternative livelihood for the poor, (sidewalk vendors would continue to be patronized)."

Pangan added that as far as he is concerned, the plan to penalize illegal vendors' customers won't gain enough support for it to be effective.



SIDEWALK vendors play a cat-and-mouse game with police on the sidestreets of Taft Avenue in Manila. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Instead of going after illegal vendors, the MMDA and the government should just remedy the root cause of the illegal trade—poverty.

"The (sidewalk clearing) drive is too artificial," he said.

Aside from this, the campaign has also become a haven for abuses committed by MMDA operatives.

According to Pangan, Sanlakas was able to document the ordeals of several sidewalk vendors in Quezon City who had suffered at the hands of the clearing personnel.

A vendor from Philcoa said that a mango vendor had been hurt in one of the MMDA's clearing operations recently. Aside from taking the victim's cart, the MMDA operatives even punched the mango vendor even when he was not on the sidewalk at all.

Even legal establishments in Philcoa have not been spared, according to the Sanlakas report. In the report, a vendor said he saw MMDA operatives take expensive mangoes and a table full of eggs from a roast chicken outlet. The operatives also carried lead pipes and hit several vendors with it, the report noted.

BARE BEAUTIES

RANDY HORMILLOSA

Young, nubile females vying for this year's Mutya ng Pilipinas crown bare their belly buttons and pose unabashed at the pool side of the Sulô Hotel in Quezon City.

2 die in botched QC drug deal

By Alcuin Papa

A DRUG deal gone wrong on Thursday led to the death of two people in Quezon City.

Police identified the victims as Mamari Dimaporo, 25, of Buyer Street, North Fairview, and Havi Abdul Gani, 64, of Kaunlaran Street, Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City.

The victims, both Muslims, were declared dead on arrival at the East Avenue Medical Center, police said.

Police managed to arrest the two suspects, Kiram and Saripuda Baharat, both neighbors of Gani.

According to the Central Police District's Criminal Investigation Unit, the shooting occurred at 2:30 p.m. inside a billiard hall on Kaunlaran Street, Barangay Commonwealth.

Gani was said to be watching a billiard game when Dimaporo appeared, armed with a pistol, and shot Gani at close range.

Dimaporo turned himself in to members of the Batasan Police Station.

But before Dimaporo could be taken into police custody, the Baharat brothers, who were friends of Gani, appeared and opened fire on Dimaporo, killing him instantly.

Investigators said illegal drugs were behind the killings.

The victims and the suspects were known drug pushers in the area.

World War II bombs found in Pasig City, Valenzuela

By Nelson Flores and Tina Santos

A WORLD War II artillery shell yesterday was dug up in a Valenzuela City street where excavation work was in progress.

Discovery of the vintage ordnance came a day after 14 World War II bombs were discovered in a Pasig City dump.

According to Chief Insp. John Chua, head of the Valenzuela police's Special Weapons and Tactics unit, a Jimmy Namnama called up the police at around 10:30 a.m. yesterday to report that a 105-mm howitzer shell was found near their establishment.

Namnama, an employee of JR Roberts Trading on G. Lazaro Street, Dalandanan, Valenzuela City, guided the bomb disposal squad to the scene. The police took the rusted and potentially dangerous bomb and sent it to Camp Crame for disposition.

In Pasig City, Insp. Priscilo de la Paz said two teenage scavengers found two unexploded World War II bombs shortly after 3 a.m. Thursday at the corner of Marcos Highway and F. Manalo Street.

De la Paz, head of the Pasig City police's Special Weapons and Tactics unit, said that a barangay councilor, Aida Juan, saw the scavengers while the latter were trying to sell their find at a nearby junk shop.

De la Paz said he and his men immediately went to the area after Juan called his office informing of the presence of the bombs.

He added that a thorough search in the vicinity led to the discovery of 12 more bombs.

De la Paz said it is still not clear how the rusted and mud-covered bombs ended in a garbage pit of a densely populated residential area, although there were indications that the bombs were found elsewhere and dumped in the area.

De la Paz said the bombs would be turned over to the Eastern Police District Office headquarters for proper disposition.

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Court orders religious leaders to explain endorsement of bets

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA regional trial court judge has rejected an appeal of the country's top religious leaders to dismiss a case questioning their practice of endorsing candidates during elections.

Judge Concepcion Alarcon-Vergara of Manila RTC Branch 49 instead chided the religious leaders for moving to dismiss the case filed by the lawyers' group Social Justice Society (SJS).

She said that she has ordered the respondents to submit memoranda explaining their positions on the SJS petition for declaratory relief.

"The Court now resolves to deny the motions to dismiss and, after all the memoranda are submitted, then the case shall be deemed as submitted for resolution," she said in a one-page order issued early this week.

Named respondents in the case were El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, Iglesia ni Cristo Executive Minister Eraño Manalo, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, Bro. Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus is Lord Movement and Bro. Eli Soriano of Ang Dating Daan.

SJS president Samson Alcantara told the INQUIRER over the phone that he welcomes the court's decision. He said the SJS petition would be resolved based on the merits of the case and not on the technicalities raised by the respondents in their motions to dismiss.

The endorsement of political candidates by religious leaders, SJS argues, is a violation of the principle of the separation of church and state.

The religious leaders contend that endorsements are an exercise of their freedoms of expression and religious belief.

Judge Vergara earlier appointed Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and the Philippine Constitutional Association as "friends of the court" to help her resolve the petition.

The SJS is urging the court to be "judicially activist" in resolving the issue, which it said is a matter of great national importance.

On Wednesday, former senator and constitutional law expert Rene Saguisag took the cudgels for Bro. Eli Soriano and asked Judge Alarcon-Vergara to dismiss the case for lack of merit.

Saguisag said the judiciary "should not be lured to enter a religious-political thicket leading to unnecessary tensions and complications."

"No one in our society may be told and directed how to vote and how not to vote, without violating the constitutional freedoms of speech and religion," Saguisag said in an 11-page petition.

It is not the task of the judiciary to rule on what may be permissible in politics and religion, Saguisag said.

He said the issue is similar to a political question and "should be left to the conscience of (the) people and each individual to decide."

Mental patient kills mom

By Christian Esguerra

A FORMER mental patient killed his mother by hacking her head off with a bolo in Muntinlupa City on Wednesday.

Suspect Noel Uy, 35, and his mother were arguing inside their shack in Pasong Makipot, Barangay Putatan before the killing, police said.

Neighbors told police that mother and son had been arguing about Uy's persistence in going to Mindanao.

They said Uy was mad when his mother refused to give him money.

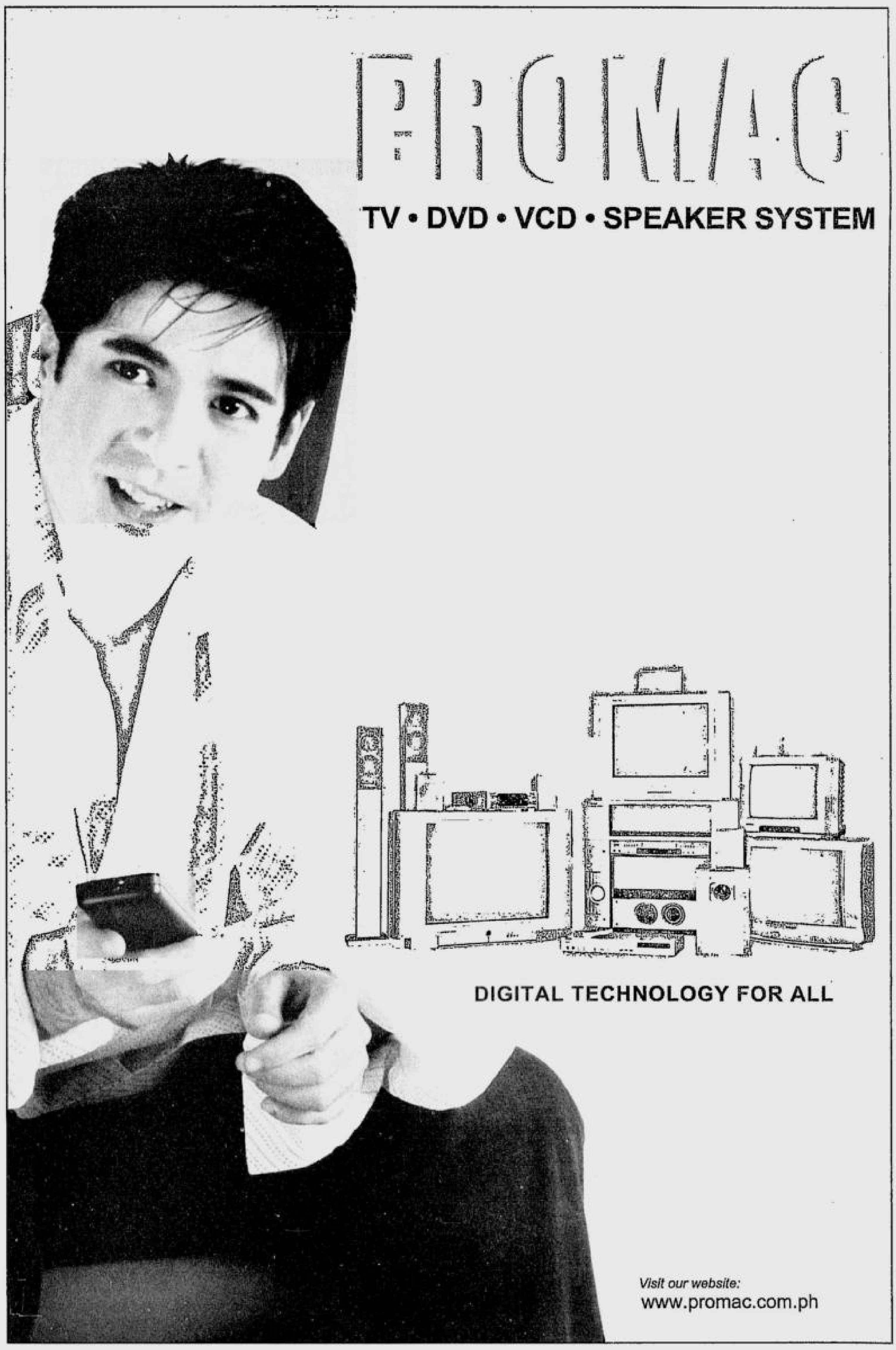
At 11:30 p.m. last Wednesday, at least two witnesses saw Uy standing in front of his house, holding a bloodstained bolo, said case investigator PO3 Buenaventura Dela Cuesta.

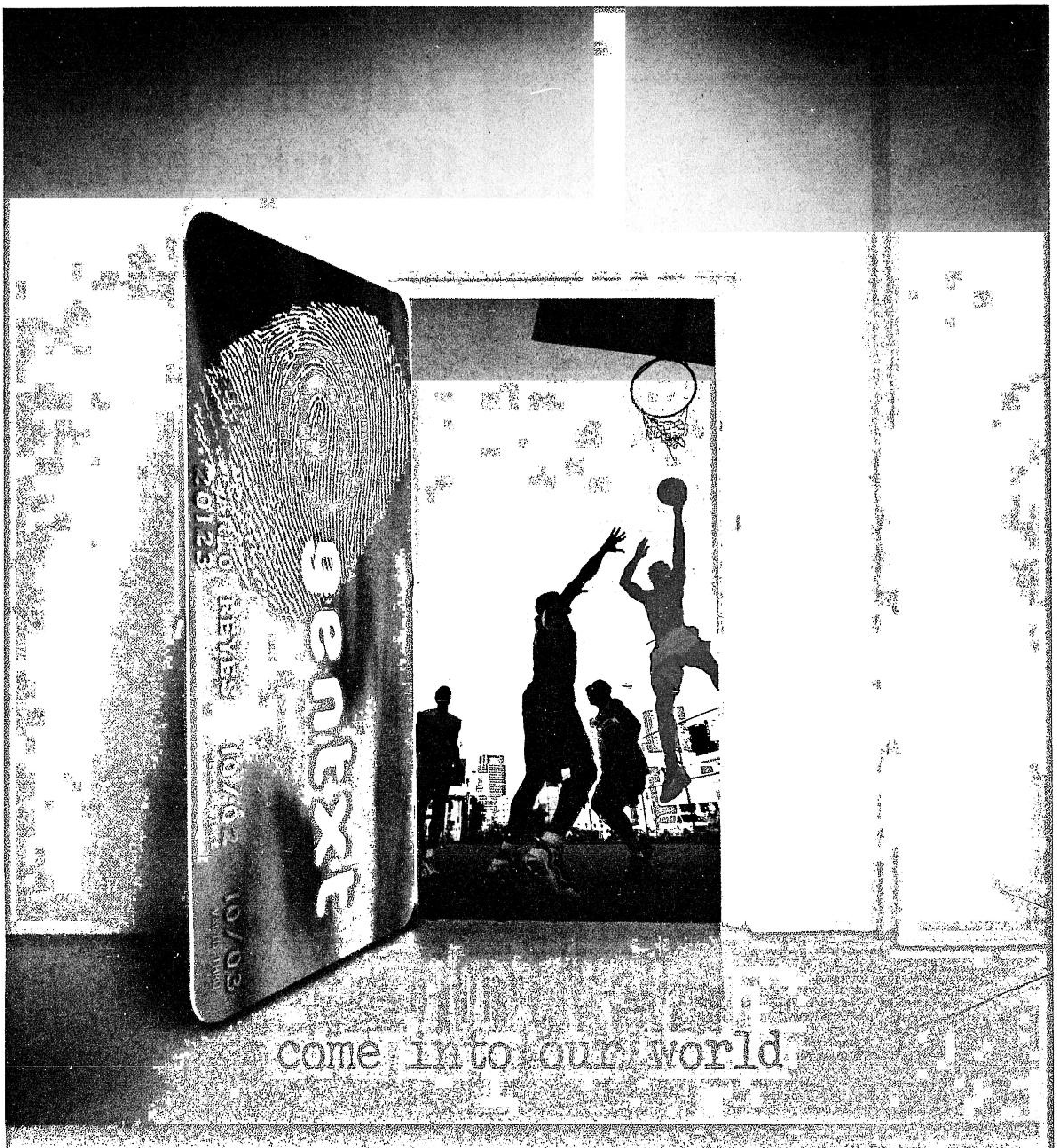
The following day, a neighbor sneaked into the house after Uy had gone for a walk and found the decapitated victim, the officer said.

Police arrested Uy upon his return.

"It appears that he stayed with his decapitated mother all night," Dela Cuesta said. "No one in his right mind would do that after killing his own mother."

Uy is facing parricide charges before the city prosecutor's office.

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PBA 'Fil-shams' can still play

By June Navarro

WHETHER they're fake or for real, all Fil-foreign players being investigated for allegedly faking their citizenship can continue playing in the PBA.

Authorities yesterday admitted that, after all the official time and effort spent digging into the so-called Filsham mess, it would take at least a full year before a deportation process could be completed.

"This means these players, although under investigation, are guaranteed of playing in the PBA for at least one more year," said Xerxes Nitafan, legislative secretary of the Senate committee on games amusements and sports that conducted its inquiry on the case of players suspected of having faked their lineage.

Nitafan, key figure in the Senate committee headed by Sen. Robert Barbers, suggested that the entire procedure of deporting the Fil-fors could take even longer than a year to complete.

Nitafan explained that the committee report, which will be released before the Senate adjourns on June 5, must get the nod of the majority before it is submitted to a plenary session for the final approval.

Seven of the 12 Senate committee members would affix their signatures on the committee report, after which Barbers would calendar and sponsor a plenary session involving all the senators.

The senators, Nitafan said, would then make the final recommendation in the plenary session and forward the cases of the Fil-fors to the Bureau of Immigration for execution.

BI officials, however, reserve the right to either reject or accept the recommendation of the Senate depending on the gravity of each case, Nitafan added.

"But most of the time, the BI executes the recommendation of the Senate," Nitafan told the INQUIRER. "BI officials who were present during the Senate hearings also promised to abide by the recommendation of the committee."

From the approval of the committee report to the time the BI issues deportation orders to guilty players, the entire process would take a long time, Nitafan said.

The Senate inquiry on the alleged presence of fake Fil-foreign players in the PBA took almost six months before Barbers wrapped up the hearings more than three weeks ago.

During the final hearing, Barbers tried to prove that Asi Taulava of Talk N Text, Coca-Cola's Rudy Hatfield, San Miguel Beer's Dorian Peña, Eric Menk of Barangay Ginebra, Jon Ordonio of Alaska, Andy Seigle of Purefoods and Alaska's Ali Peek had indeed falsified their citizenship papers.

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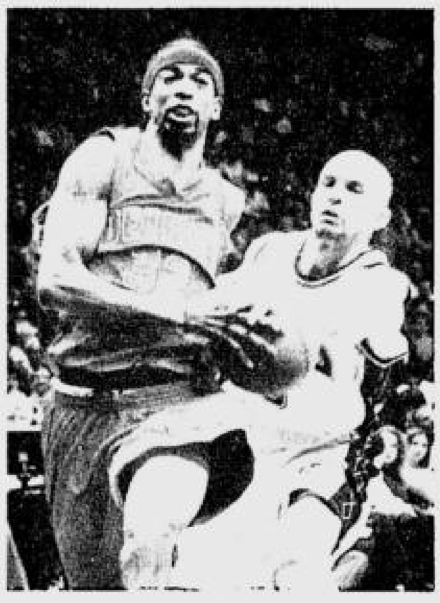
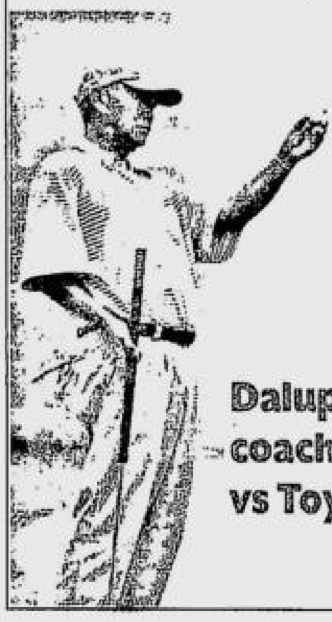


Nets rout Pistons, move closer to series sweep /A26

Annika wows 'em /A28

Cavs win LeBron James sweepstakes /A26



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NOVALICHES ☎ 936.9757	AFTER 8 ZEST	NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎ (049)511.7268	MUSIC CIRCUIT POWER SURGE	NO ENTRANCE FEE
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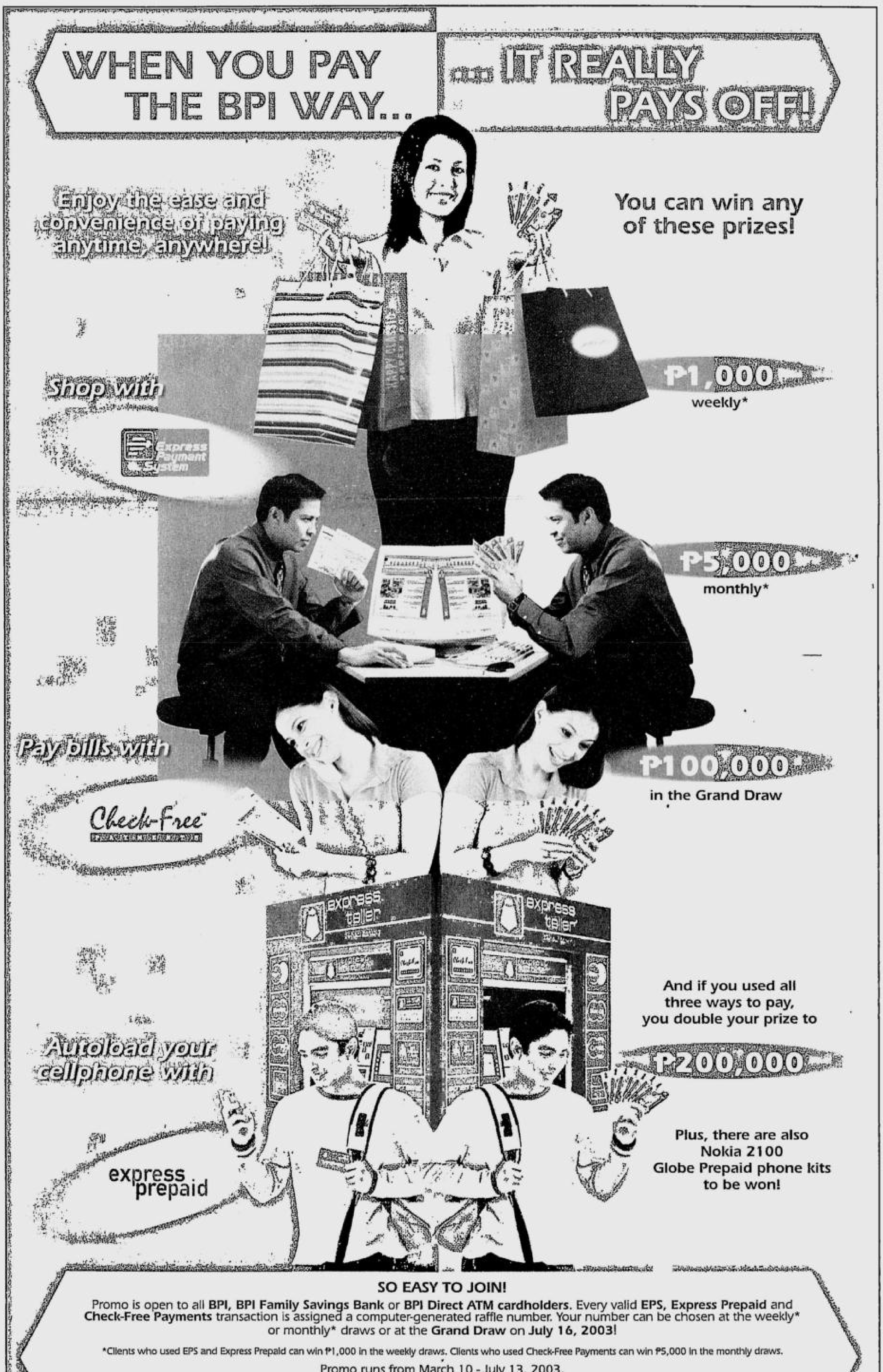
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Promo runs from March 10 - July 13, 2003.
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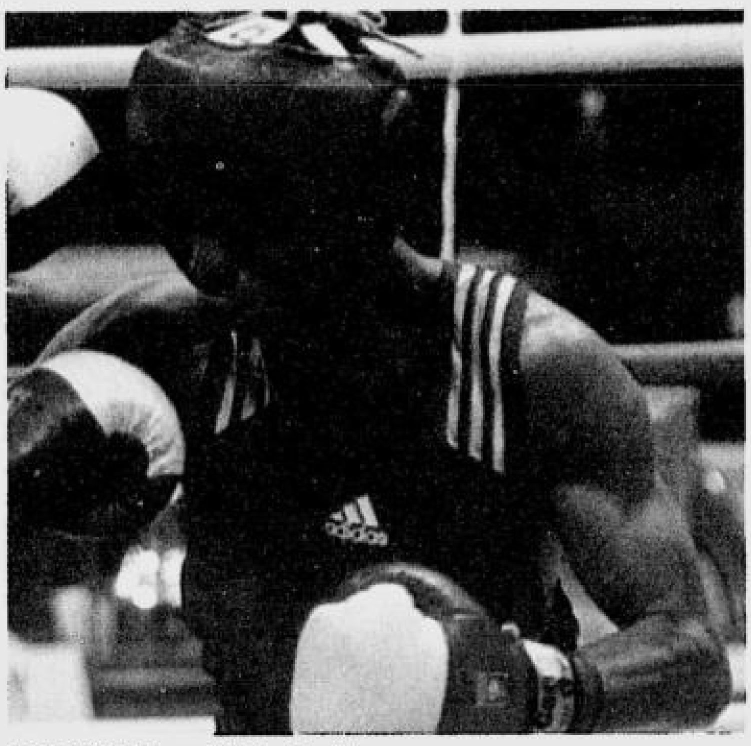
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THIRD seed Joshua Tan Ho eliminated top seed Daniel Luis Macalino, 6-3, 7-5, yesterday to reach the boys' 14-under finals in the Alibor-St. Benilde age-group tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Tan Ho, 12-under champion in the Toby's-Philta event two weeks ago, will face unseeded El Santo Santos of Tagum City, who upset No. 8 Leyan Moncera of Olongapo City, 6-3, 6-4. In the boys' 18-under, No. 1 Yannick Guba downed No. 5 Mark Jorolan, 6-2, 6-0, to reach the finals against No. 2 Janjie Soquino, a 6-3, 6-2 winner over No. 3 Laurence Magaway. Boys' 12-under second seed Francis Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro City outplayed No. 4 Tomic Apacible, 6-2, 6-0, to forge a title showdown with Akio Hari-Ong Sy, who scored a 6-3, 6-2 win over Palawan's Randy Delavin. No. 1 Cebuano Bernardine Siso outclassed No. 5 Alberto Villamor, 6-1, 6-1, and No. 6 Robert Ortelano stunned No. 2 Juan Pocholo Macalino, 6-1, 6-1, to arrange a showdown for the unisex 10-under title. In the girls' 12-under division, No. 1 Sarah Jane Lim downed Linda Marie Santos, 6-1, 6-2, to advance in the finals against No. 3 Jonica Martina Guba, a 6-1, 6-0 winner over Kristine Ortega.

Spring battles M. Lhuillier

OZAMIZ CITY—Regional basketball action blasts off today with the opening of the National Basketball League's first national championship at the Gov. Anghel N. Medina Memorial gym here. Two games pitting reigning Interclub champion Spring Cooking Oil-Bulacan against Cebu's M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala at 5 p.m. and host team Compak Shineway-Ozamiz against Air Philippines-Bacolod Flights at 7 o'clock will follow the hour-long opening ceremony set at 4. Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. will deliver an inspirational talk, declare the league open and make the ceremonial toss together with other guests. Vice Mayor Carlos Patricio Bernad will welcome the participating teams and officials of the tourney sponsored by Tanduay Rhum, Air Philippines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, BJ Star Logistics, The Freeman, Supercat, Cebu Ferries and Molten Basketballs. The games will be televised over IBC 13 through the facilities of Silverstar Communications.

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CKP VALLE VERDE 5 SRS A BASKETBALL TEAM
CHAMPIONS!
GREEN MEADOWS GYM
MAY 2003

INTERVILLAGE CHAMP

THE CKP-VV5 basketball team recently won the VVB Intervillage Basketball Classic by blasting the CSA team (composed of former St. Benilde players), 70-54, at the Greenmeadows gym. Photo above shows: (front row, from left) VV5 sports director Charlie Yu Galan, Ali Muslim, Lito Aguilar, Jay Valdez, Pidio Salvador, Mark Seyarot, Brad (utility); (back, left to right): John Te, William Fong (playing team manager), Xernan Hernandez, Edward Aquino, Jojo Belano, Philip Palma, Emil Morente and James Morente. Not in photo is coach Adonis Tierra.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SPORTS
SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2003

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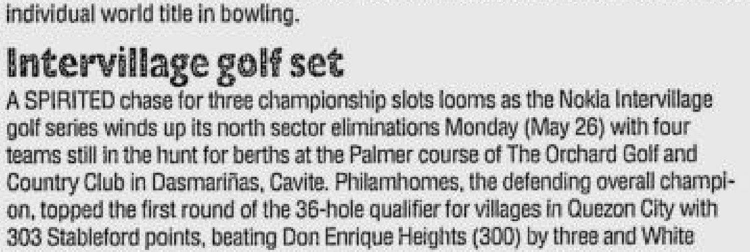
A SPIRITED chase for three championship slots looms as the Nokia Intervillage golf series winds up its north sector eliminations Monday (May 26) with four teams still in the hunt for berths at the Palmer course of The Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Philamhomes, the defending overall champion, topped the first round of the 36-hole qualifier for villages in Quezon City with 303 Stableford points, beating Don Enrique Heights (300) by three and White Plains (293) by 10 points on April 24 at The Riviera. But it is expected to be an entirely different scenario at the Palmer course with Xavierville, Acropolis, Filinvest 1 and La Vista hoping to come up with a strong finishing kick to boost their respective bids in this event sponsored by Nokia, the world leader in mobile communications. The four teams remained within striking distance for the last spot.

Tan Ho makes final

THIRD seed Joshua Tan Ho eliminated top seed Daniel Luis Macalino, 6-3, 7-5, yesterday to reach the boys' 14-under finals in the Alibor-St. Benilde age-group tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Tan Ho, 12-under champion in the Toby's-Philta event two weeks ago, will face unseeded El Santo Santos of Tagum City, who upset No. 8 Leyan Moncera of Olongapo City, 6-3, 6-4. In the boys' 18-under, No. 1 Yannick Guba downed No. 5 Mark Jorolan, 6-2, 6-0, to reach the finals against No. 2 Janjie Soquino, a 6-3, 6-2 winner over No. 3 Laurence Magaway. Boys' 12-under second seed Francis Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro City outplayed No. 4 Tomic Apacible, 6-2, 6-0, to forge a title showdown with Akio Hari-Ong Sy, who scored a 6-3, 6-2 win over Palawan's Randy Delavin. No. 1 Cebuano Bernardine Siso outclassed No. 5 Alberto Villamor, 6-1, 6-1, and No. 6 Robert Ortelano stunned No. 2 Juan Pocholo Macalino, 6-1, 6-1, to arrange a showdown for the unisex 10-under title. In the girls' 12-under division, No. 1 Sarah Jane Lim downed Linda Marie Santos, 6-1, 6-2, to advance in the finals against No. 3 Jonica Martina Guba, a 6-1, 6-0 winner over Kristine Ortega.

Spring battles M. Lhuillier

OZAMIZ CITY—Regional basketball action blasts off today with the opening of the National Basketball League's first national championship at the Gov. Anghel N. Medina Memorial gym here. Two games pitting reigning Interclub champion Spring Cooking Oil-Bulacan against Cebu's M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala at 5 p.m. and host team Compak Shineway-Ozamiz against Air Philippines-Bacolod Flights at 7 o'clock will follow the hour-long opening ceremony set at 4. Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. will deliver an inspirational talk, declare the league open and make the ceremonial toss together with other guests. Vice Mayor Carlos Patricio Bernad will welcome the participating teams and officials of the tourney sponsored by Tanduay Rhum, Air Philippines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, BJ Star Logistics, The Freeman, Supercat, Cebu Ferries and Molten Basketballs. The games will be televised over IBC 13 through the facilities of Silverstar Communications.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GREEN MEADOWS GYM
MAY 2003

INTERVILLAGE CHAMP

THE CKP-VV5 basketball team recently won the VVB Intervillage Basketball Classic by blasting the CSA team (composed of former St. Benilde players), 70-54, at the Greenmeadows gym. Photo above shows: (front row, from left) VV5 sports director Charlie Yu Galan, Ali Muslim, Lito Aguilar, Jay Valdez, Pidio Salvador, Mark Seyarot, Brad (utility); (back, left to right): John Te, William Fong (playing team manager), Xernan Hernandez, Edward Aquino, Jojo Belano, Philip Palma, Emil Morente and James Morente. Not in photo is coach Adonis Tierra.

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If not for its oysters

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WHEN is a beach a beach?

I ask because there's this stretch of sand in Roxas City that is just beside the highway. You can pull over when you are driving, walk in the sand, test the water next and you will find that you have just dipped into one of the most refreshing bodies of water in the world. The place has no name; the folk there just call it Baybay.

I will call it a beach if only because people swim there almost every day. Young and old alike simply enjoy the calm waters of Baybay, which stretches up to the world-famous Boracay all the way to Romblon.

The sand isn't white as sheet but it is as fine as powdered talcum powder.

Also, I call it a beach because if you don't call it that, how then do we call any sand and sea attached together anywhere on earth?

Anyway, Baybay of Roxas City is also special in that it is where the late Manuel Roxas used to commune with nature. In case you have forgotten, Roxas was a former president of this republic. His most famous grandson now is none other than Secretary Mar Roxas, one of Ate Glo's favorite Cabinet secretaries. Mar's palatial house is just across from the road facing Baybay.

I've been to Roxas City thrice. The first time was in 1980 when I covered the second Tour ng Pilipinas cycling marathon won by Manuel Reynante.

The city's main attraction then was Baybay, which teems with people from dusk till almost midnight. It was still that way when I went back there the second time in the mid-'90s.

Today, the place has changed drastically, or has been changed if you will. The city now prides in having a mall-Gaisano. Oh, it's filled to the rafters day and night.

"Only about 10 years ago, this place is a world of tranquility, particularly Baybay," said Dante T. Fernandez, who was born and raised in Roxas City.

The city's other great sons aside from Dante include Frank Alba of Prudential Life, Bert Bravo of U-Bix and Caffe Appassionato fame and LTO chief Bobby Lastimoso.

Added Dante: "We stroll on the beach at night to the music of the rustle of waves. Mornings, we jog on the beach with our faces kissed by the morning's cold breeze. After that, we go to a restaurant in the wet market and slurp on boiled, steaming baby shark. That'd be a real hearty breakfast and our day is made."

Actually, that is just one of Roxas City's delicacies. Asec Lastimoso goes home to his city by the bay every now and then just to wolf the same baby shark down. As he did only last weekend, when he brought his family to a restaurant by the city's river that specializes on "nilagang pating." Boy, did they make quite a scene.

Baybay's shark an endangered species?

"Not at all," said Nelson Almonguera, a schoolteacher for 30-plus years in Roxas City, whose wife Vielma, the newly retired schoolteacher herself, cooks the best *kaldereta and obad* (boiled native chicken liberally sprinkled with the chopped core of a banana trunk) in that city off Panay Island. "It's a delicacy, yes, but we have lots of it. We are fortunate to have an abundance of that here and people simply adore it."

But whereas before Baybay was a rustic beauty of unspoiled nature, today it has become mainly a scene of man and machine, if not of metal and money.

The beach is now dotted with cottages made of bamboo and stilts, of beer houses and eateries for picnickers and beachcombers alike. Karaoke bars are ready to take over the place, seemingly all set to blast away whatever is left of "mother nature's son" with all those ear-splitting sounds, from "My Love Will See You Through" to "Bikining Itim."

Goodbye to the soothing sound of ocean wave, enter the roar of wild products of commercialism? I dread to see the day when stereo components would blare from morning till dark, engulfing whatever serenity is left of the place.

Over at Baybay today, there is very little space now for moonlight serenades, for morning joggers. It has become a veritable haven of traders not concerned that much about the preservation of nature. Seemingly, only one–the chicken house named RML–appears to exhibit a semblance of how to put up a business establishment by the beach the politically correct way.

But all is not lost in the city of Dante's song-and-dance youth, in the city of Bert's declamation-inspired growing up pains, in the city of Lastimoso's shark-infested childhood. In their hearts, Roxas City still owns the sweetest, juiciest oysters in the world.

The beach that is Baybay is but only incidental.

NOSTALGIA GAME

Dalupan to coach Crispa vs Toyota

By Dennis U. Eroa

IT'S on with the reunion.

Coach Baby Dalupan, who had begged off to attend a family affair, yesterday confirmed during the weekly SCOOP Forum at the Kamayan West his willingness to coach Crispa in its much-awaited reunion against Toyota on May 30 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Boomy Guererro, Dalupan's grandson, first called SCOOP president Eddie Alinea to say that his grandfather would like to coach the Redmanizers.

Later, it was Dalupan himself, owner of 13 PBA titles, who made an overseas call to Alinea to confirm his attendance.

Dalupan, vacationing in California, had earlier said he may not be able to grace the PBA affair as he has to be in Negros with his wife for a very important family affair that's held every four years.

Joy Dionisio, the first player to score a basket while playing for Concepcion in the 1975 PBA inaugural game versus Noritake, will also don the Crispa colors, together with his former teammates.

The Crispa-Toyota game on May 30 is a main attraction in the All-Star Reunion on June 1.

Meanwhile, at least six foreign teams have confirmed willingness to join the PBA Asian Invitationals. Commissioner Noli Eala said these squads are from Canada, Korea, Australia, Europe and the US.

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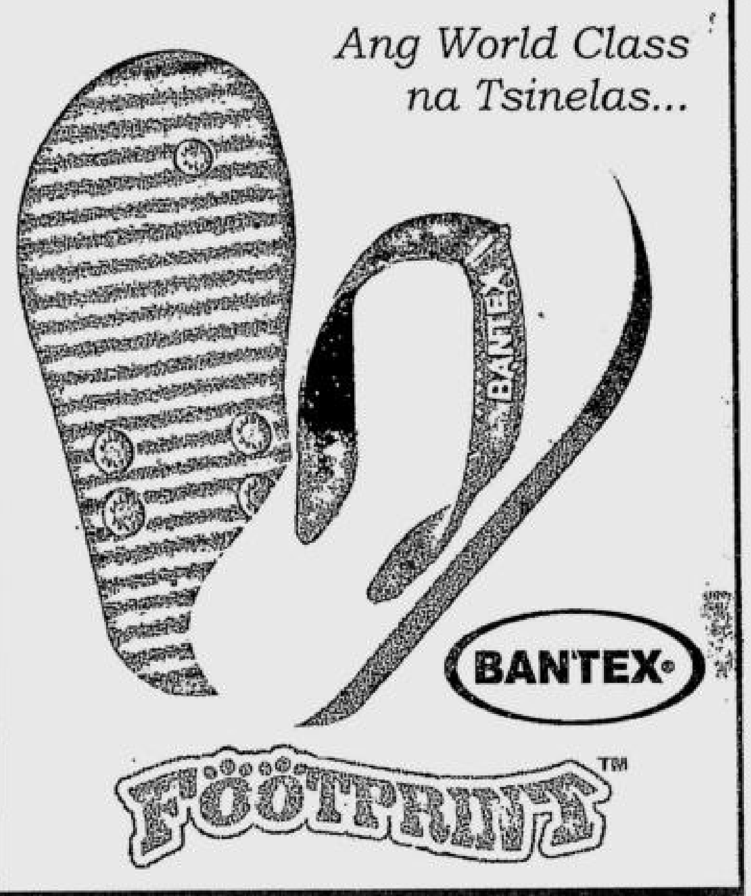
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Race 3--1. Mrs. Rainier 2. Fast Eddie 3. Hyperbid
Race 4--1. Man Of The Hour 2. Swallow Ur Pride 3. Lady Victoria
Race 5--1. Petro Dollar 2. Music Express 3. Flying Machine
Race 6--1. Concorde 2. Hallmark 3. Ponchito
Race 7--1. Exchange Deal 2. Court General 3. Glamour Girl
Race 8--1. Adam's Call 2. Perfect Storm 3. Southern Charm
Race 9--1. Ikaw Pag-Asa Ko 2. Hydrogas 3. Cue Artist
Race 10--1. Explorer 2. Real Material 3. Joshua Tree
Race 11--1. Siete De Marso 2. Aga Aba Aba 3. Time And Again
Race 12--1. Nureyev Heiress 2. Lucky El 3. Tervalac
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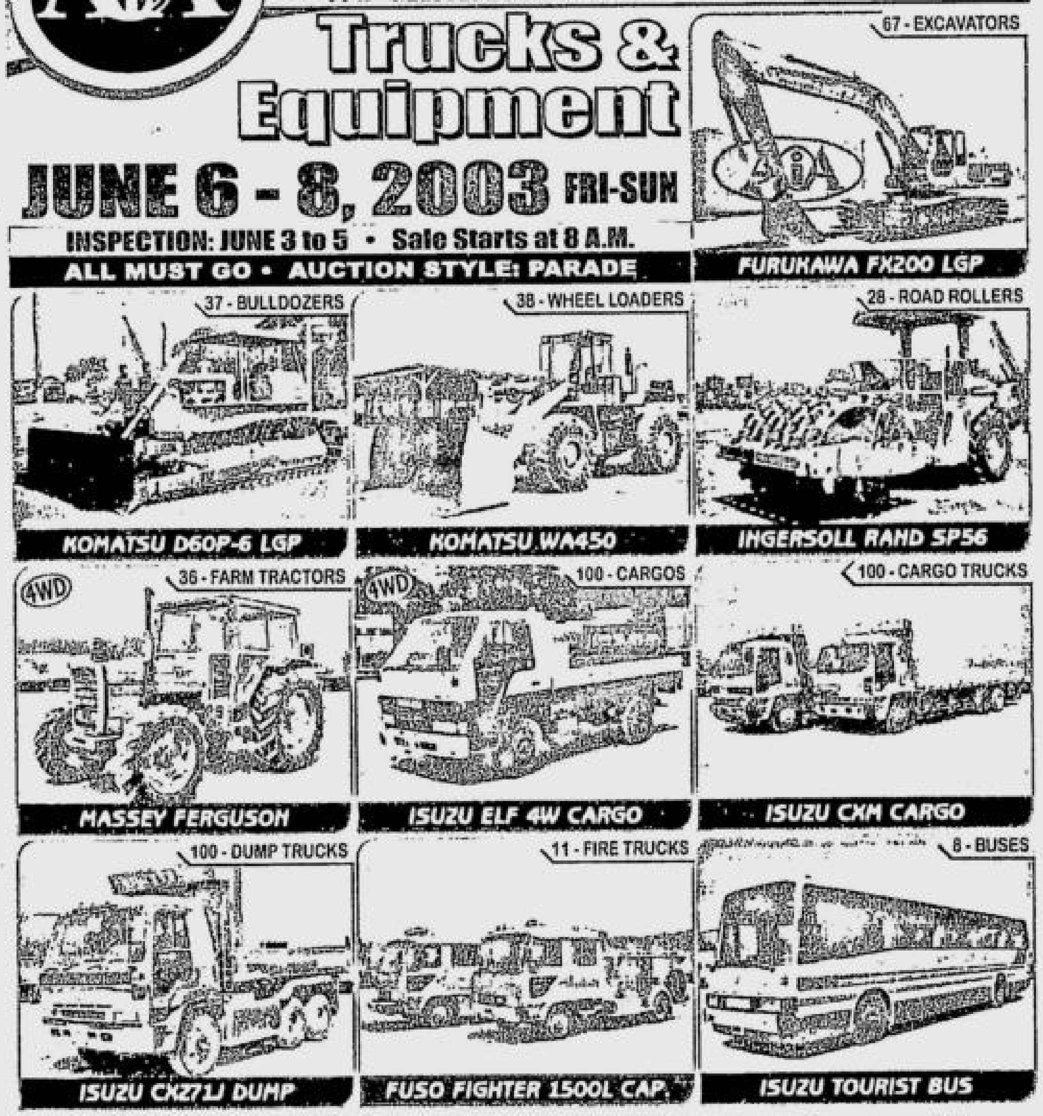

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AT A GLANCE

NBA PLAYOFFS 2003

CONFERENCE FINALS

Eastern Conference

(1) Detroit vs. (2) New Jersey
Pistons 0, Nets 3
Game 1: New Jersey 76, Detroit 74
Game 2: New Jersey 88, Detroit 86
Game 3: New Jersey 97, Detroit 85
Game 4 at New Jersey (May 25, TBD)
Game 5 at Detroit (May 27, 8 a.m.)
*Game 6 at New Jersey (May 29, 8 a.m.)
*Game 7 at Detroit (May 31, 8 a.m.)

Western Conference

(1) San Antonio vs (3) Dallas
Spurs 1, Mavericks 1
Game 1: Dallas 113, San Antonio 110
Game 2: San Antonio 119, Dallas 106
Game 3 at Dallas (May 24, 9:00 a.m.)
Game 4 at Dallas (May 26, 8:30 a.m.)
*Game 5 at San Antonio (May 28, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 6 at Dallas (May 30, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 1, 8:30 a.m.)

* If necessary
TBD (To Be Determined)

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: PGA Bank of America Colonial; 11 p.m. (r) and tomorrow at 4:30 a.m.; Star Sports - Action heats up deep in the heart of Texas as the field is narrowed down.

BASKETBALL: NBA Action; 9 a.m. (r - 7:30 p.m.); ESPN - Recap the week that was in the NBA in this half - hour program.

Spurs vs Mavericks, Game 3; 9:30 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.); Solar Sports; 11 a.m. (r - 5:30 p.m.) - Dallas hopes that some home cooking will do the trick as they host San Antonio at the American Airlines Center.

NBA Inside Stuff; 2:30 p.m. (r); Star Sports - Get your fix of NBA highlights and interviews in this show hosted by former football player Ahmad Rashad and Olympic swimmer Summer Sanders.

BILLIARDS: Rack 'Em Up 2; 1 p.m.; ESPN - Django Bustamante attempts to make Marcus Chamat anothef victim on the pool table.

World Pool Masters 2002; 10:30 a.m. (r); ESPN - Relive competition among top cue artists in the battle of the world's best.

SPORTS noodle

Bong Barrameda

VOL.1 NO. 008

Lights, camera, action!

A serving of 7 questions, from easiest to toughest, each with a corresponding point value. Can you score a perfect 100 (or, at least, beat the other 'sports genius/geniuses' beside you)?

1 > 3 Pts.

☐ True / ☐ False: The 1996 blockbuster Jerry Maguire-which made "Show me the money!" a household expression-was about US major league baseball.

2 > 5 Pts.

Who was Robert Jaworski's co-star in the 1978 movie Dobol Dribol?
☐ Nora Aunor
☐ Vilma Santos

3 > 7 Pts.

Which actor starred in Field of Dreams, Bull Durham, and Tin Cup?
☐ Robert de Niro
☐ Kevin Costner
☐ Robert Redford

4 > 10 Pts.

What's the title of the 1985 film about the life and fast times of sprint queen Lydia de Vega-Mercado?
☐ Takbo, Lydia, Takbo
☐ Medalyang Ginto
☐ Golden Girl

5 > 15 Pts.

Which Olympics was the subject of Chariots of Fire which won as Oscar Best Picture in 1981?
☐ 1896 Athens Games
☐ 1924 Paris Games
☐ 1936 Berlin Games
☐ 1972 Munich Games

6 > 25 Pts.

What's the name of aging pool hustler played by Paul Newman (for which he won his first and only Oscar Best Actor award) in the 1986 film The Color of Money?
☐ Henry Gondorf
☐ John Rooney
☐ Michael Gallagher
☐ Eddie Felson

7 > 30 Pts.

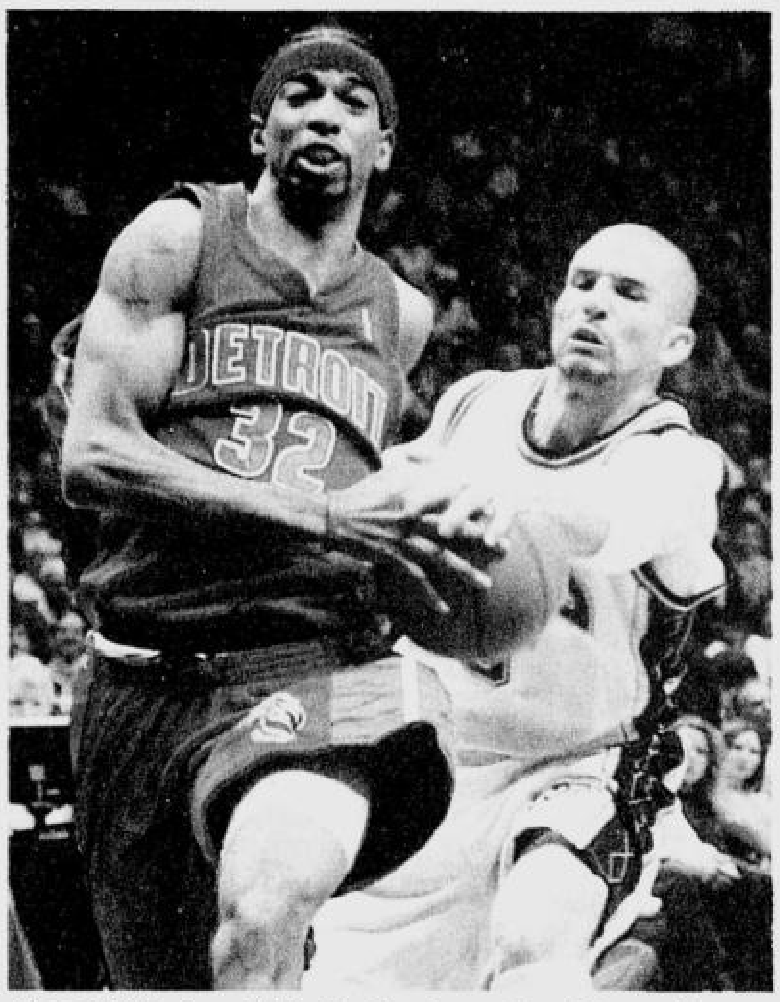
Sylvester Stallone created his famous 'Rocky' film hero after watching a white underdog nicknamed "The Bayonne Bleeder" send Muhammad Ali to the canvas in the 9th round before eventually losing to "The Greatest" on a 15th-round TKO in 1975. Name this one-time heavyweight contender who was later dubbed "The Real Life Rocky."

ANSWERS/ A28

Nets rout Pistons, move closer to series sweep

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Jason Kidd scored a career playoff-high 34 points and Kenyon Martin had 19 as the New Jersey Nets finally hit their uptempo stride and moved within one victory of an Eastern Conference finals sweep by beating the Detroit Pistons 97-85 Thursday.

"It felt good to get out and get some easy baskets," Kidd said.



KIDD STUFF -- Jason Kidd of the New Jersey Nets did everything against the Pistons, like stealing the ball from Richard Hamilton (above), shooting off Clifford Robinson (right) ...

"We got our hands on a lot of balls, and we got a lot of rebounds that led to fast breaks. Anytime you can do that, the basket gets bigger."

The Nets sputtered before winning the first two games of the series by two points apiece with fourth-quarter rallies, with the scores in the '70s and '80s. The defending conference champions have won nine straight playoff games and can close out their second straight sweep Saturday night when they host Game 4.

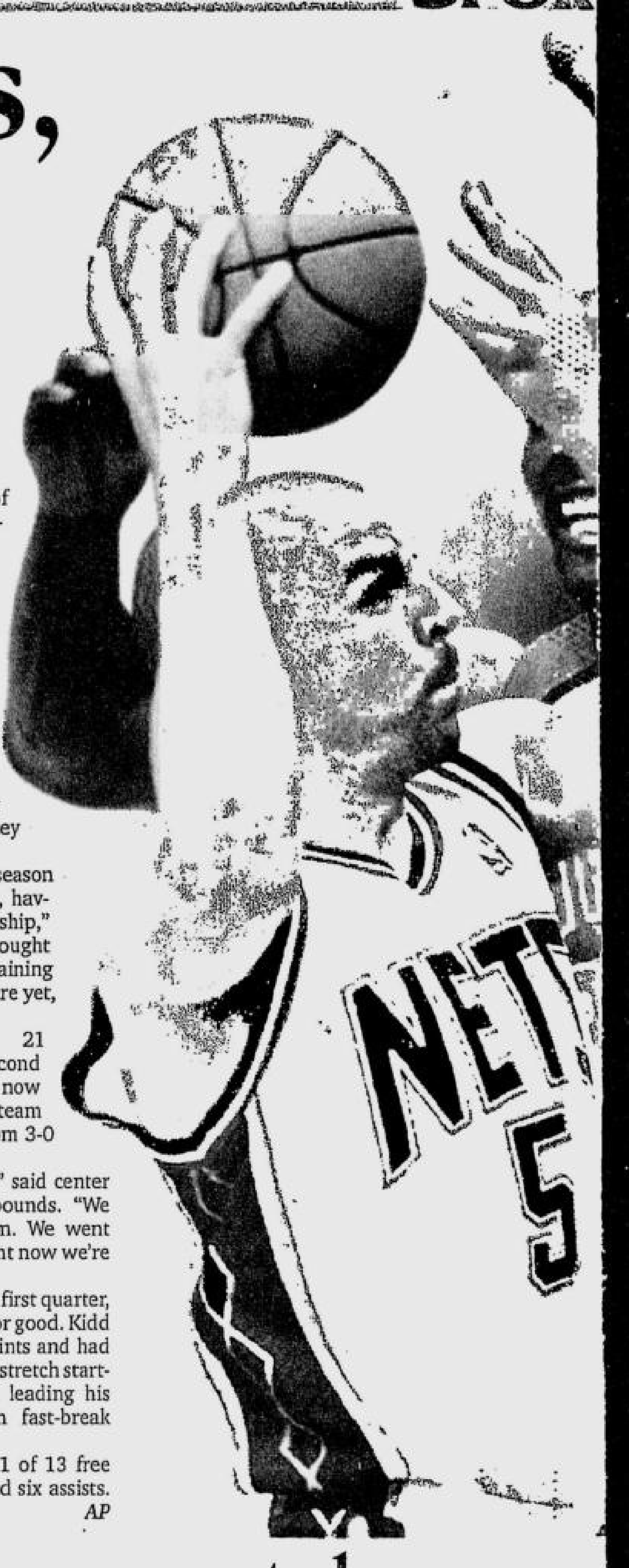
"It's what we talked about all season long—getting back to the finals, having a chance to win the championship," coach Byron Scott said. "We thought about this in October, when training camp started. We haven't got there yet, but we're one game away."

Richard Hamilton scored 21 points—but only six in the second half—to lead the Pistons, who now must attempt to become the first team in NBA history to come back from 3-0 down to win a series.

"We've got to play as a team," said center Ben Wallace, who had 15 rebounds. "We came into this series as a team. We went through struggles as a team. Right now we're not playing team basketball."

Martin scored 14 points in the first quarter, when New Jersey took the lead for good. Kidd scored 15 of New Jersey's 19 points and had two steals during a 9 1/2-minute stretch starting late in the second quarter, leading his team to a 32-4 advantage in fast-break points.

Kidd made 11 of 21 shots, 11 of 13 free throws and had 12 rebounds and six assists. Regardless of the method. *AP*



Cavs win LeBron James sweepstakes

SECAUCUS, New Jersey—The Cleveland Cavaliers scored perhaps the biggest victory in franchise history Thursday, winning the lottery and the right to select LeBron James, the 18-year-old high school phenom from nearby Akron.

"We don't know who we are going to pick," Cavaliers owner Gordon Gund quipped. He later held up a Cleveland jersey with James' name embroidered on the back and his No. 23.

"I'm very excited for the fans of Cleveland," said Gund, who smiled broadly after NBA Deputy Commissioner Russ Granik announced that the Cavs had won the James sweepstakes. "This is a great day for them and for all of that market, for Akron, for Cleveland, all of northeastern Ohio. I'm tremendously excited about it. It's a big day in Cleveland sports."

The Memphis Grizzlies got the second selection for the June 26 draft, but that pick goes to the Detroit Pistons. Detroit, which posted the best record in the Eastern Conference, had the rights to Memphis' first-round pick because of a trade for Otis Thorpe in 1997.

The Grizzlies would have been allowed to keep the pick if it had been No. 1.

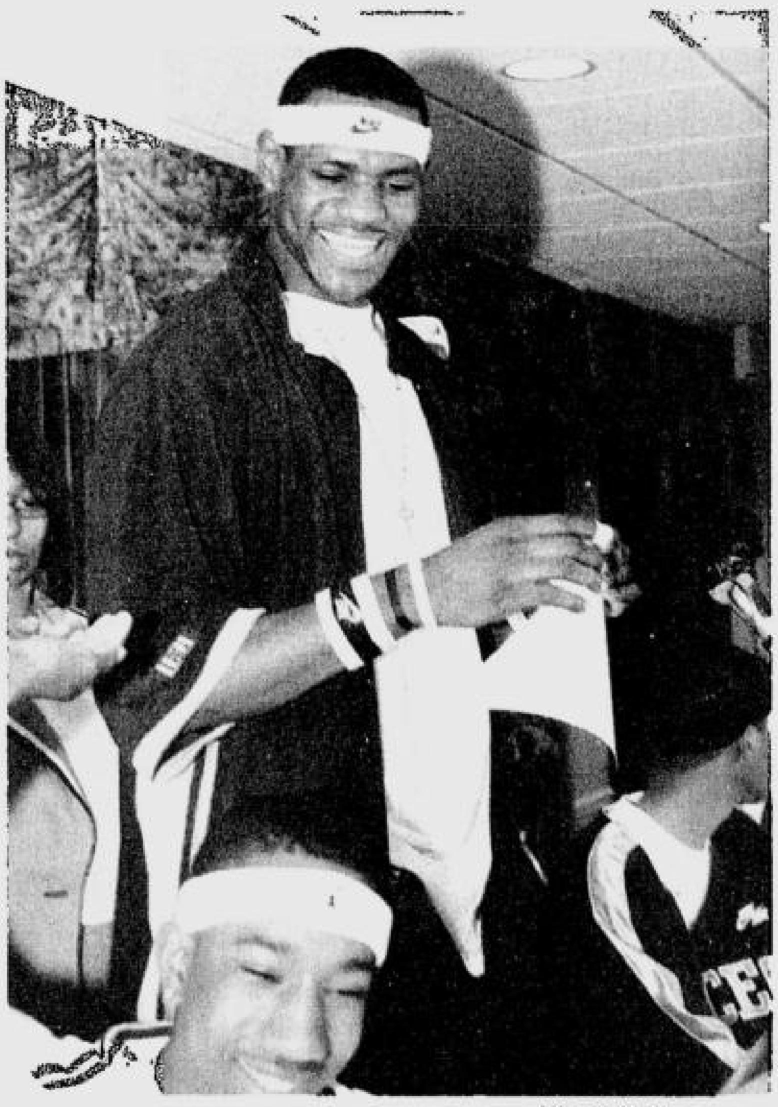
The Denver Nuggets will pick third.

Carmelo Anthony, who led Syracuse University to the national championship this season as a freshman, is projected to be taken after James.

Darko Milicic, a left-handed 7-foot player from Serbia and Montenegro, who turns 18 on June 20, is the best of the big men available, and he's expected to be the No. 3 pick.

James is considered by most experts the kind of rare player who can turn around the fortunes of a franchise.

"I'm staying in Cleveland, and I'm real excited," James said at a news conference, wearing a Nike headband and warmup suit and surrounded by his St. Vincent-St. Mary High School teammates.



KID STUFF -- LeBron James, 18-year-old high school basketball star, enjoys a laugh with his high school teammates. REUTERS

The 6-foot-8 swingman, who just signed an endorsement contract with Nike worth more than $90 million and another deal with Upper Deck trading cards for an undisclosed amount of money, averaged 30.4 points, 9.7 rebounds, 4.9 assists and 2.9 steals as a senior.

James will try to lead the Cavaliers to the playoffs for the first time since 1997-98, and he's bound to be a big box-office attraction for a team that tied Denver for the worst record in the league this past season at 17-65.

James didn't want to make any predictions about what he'll be able to do for the Cavs.

"I'm not going to guarantee a championship," James said. "But I will guarantee we'll get better every day. We're going to be a lot better than we were last year."

It was the first time since 1990 that the team with the worst record—in this case a tie for the worst record—won the lottery. New Jersey was the last team, selecting Derrick Coleman with the first pick.

Denver, which like Cleveland had 225 chances out of 1,000, slipped to No. 3 in the draft order, despite having the same record as the Cavs.

"Regardless, we're going to get a great player no matter what," Nuggets owner Stan Kroenke said.

Toronto got the fourth pick, and it was followed by Miami, the Los Angeles Clippers, Chicago, Milwaukee, the Knicks, Washington, Golden State, Seattle and Memphis.

Milwaukee, which made the playoffs, got Atlanta's pick at No. 8 because of the trade that sent Glenn Robinson to Atlanta last August. The Hawks would have kept the pick had they received one of the top three. Memphis got the 13th pick as part of a trade that sent Steve Francis to Houston in 1999.

For all the teams that didn't get the top pick, the good news is that this is one deepest drafts in years.

This is the first time the Cleveland has had the first pick in the draft since 1986, when it took Brad Daugherty. *AP*

Nike hopes to keep hoops market share with m

BEAVERTON, Oregon—Nike Inc. has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on celebrity athlete endorsements over the years, adding its trademark "swoosh" to stars like Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods.

But signing high school basketball phenomenon LeBron James to a contract worth more than $90 million is a rare move for Nike, considering its latest pitchman has yet to step onto the court as a professional.

"There's no question about it, there is a tremendous risk here," said John Horan, publisher of the Sporting Goods Intelligence newsletter.

The Beaverton-based athletic shoe and clothing maker signed the 18-year-old James to a seven-year endorsement contract Thursday. Later, the Cleveland Cavaliers won the NBA draft lottery; they're expected to select James—who's from Akron, Ohio—in the June 26 draft.

Nike is playing for big stakes—a $8-billion market for athletic shoes in the United States. By outbidding rivals Reebok and Adidas for James, Nike hopes to block erosion of its US market share for basketball shoes, which depends almost entirely on teenage boys, said David Carter, a University of Southern California sports marketing professor.

If the James endorsement deal helps Nike preserve just 1 percent of that market share, the company breaks even, Carter said.

"So when you're talking $90 million, the question is, would you bet 1 percent of your market share on LeBron James? Absolutely," Carter said.

The deal might make financial sense, but now an awful lot is riding on a very young man who won't have the benefit of working on his game in college. Paul Swangard, managing director of the Warsaw Sports Marketing Center at the University of Oregon, called the deal an "act of faith."

But he said the deal was so important that Nike founder and chairman Phil Knight was brought in to close the deal, showing James how the company could create an entire line of products around him, as it did for Jordan, who eventually became a Nike executive after overseeing the creation of the Air Jordan brand.

"My sense is that LeBron probably left some money on the table with other deals with Reebok and Adidas," Swangard said. "It was ultimately less about the money and more about the platform Nike created for him."

"Certainly the hype and
buzz around LeBron is unpr
dented, but I think this deal
as much to do with industry
ditions as it did with his tal
Horan said.

The worst-case scenario is a
jury or scandal sidelining Jame
fore he proves himself in the N
but the payoff potential is tren
dous if he lives up to his billing
becomes a superstar like Jo
did, marketing experts said.

By comparison, Jordan wa
relative bargain in 1984, w
Nike signed him for $2.5 mil
over five years. By the time Jo
first retired from the NBA in 1
Nike had turned him into a br

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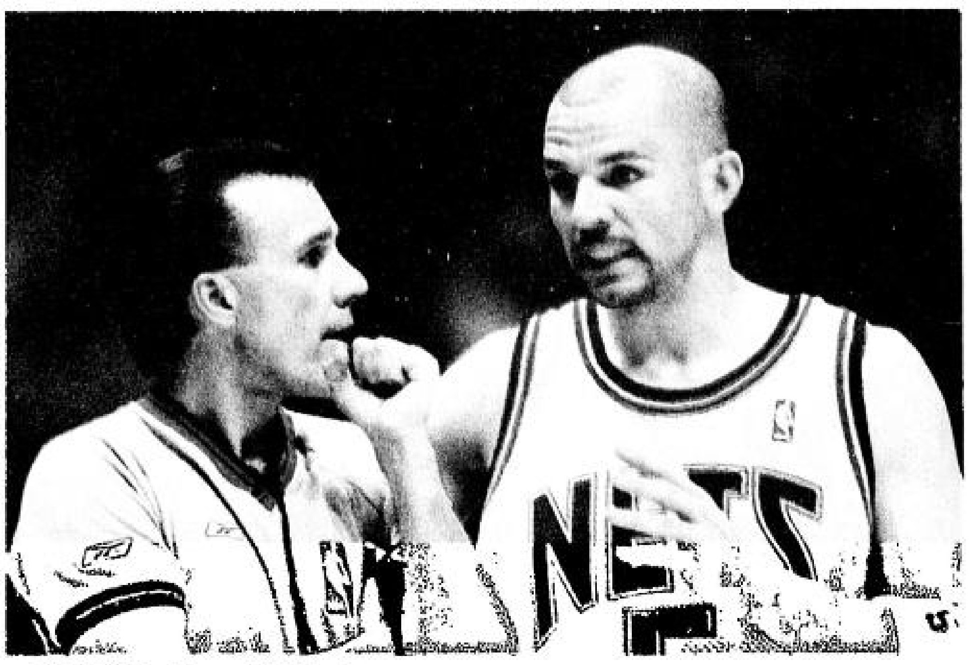
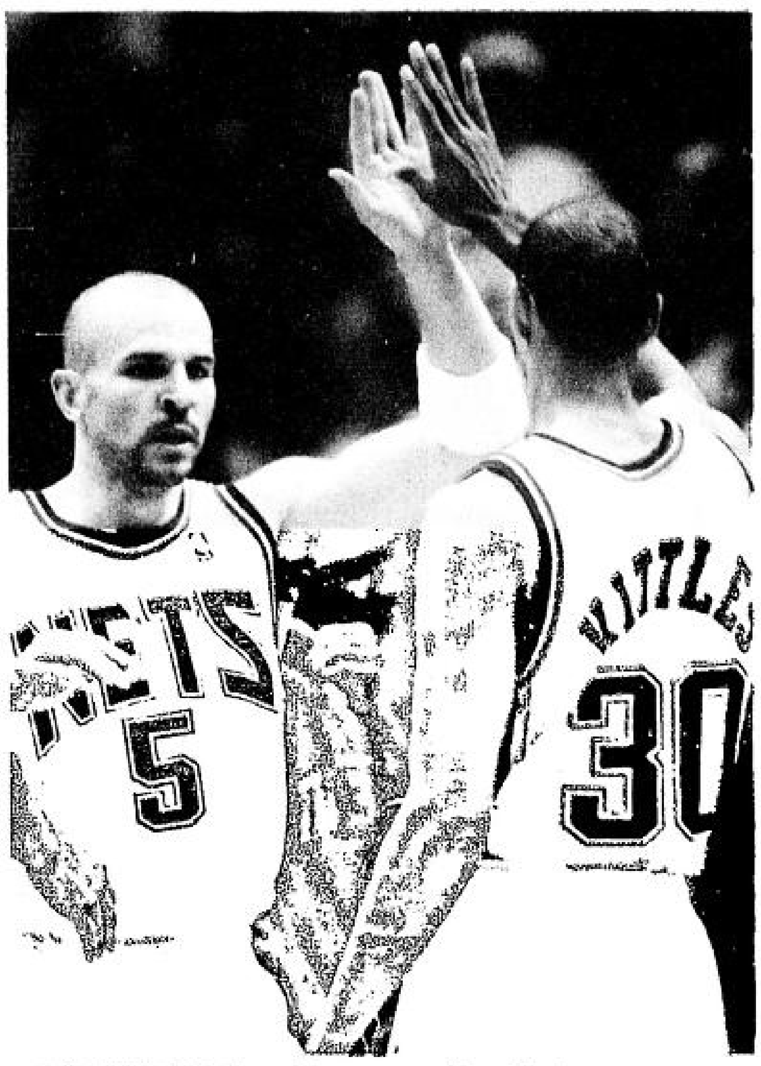


... **ARGUING** with an official and ...



... **SWAPPING** high fives with teammate Kerry Kittles.

CARBURETION DAY

Indy champ loves Brickyard tradition

INDIANAPOLIS — As Helio Castroneves rode a golf cart through Gasoline Alley and headed for pit lane, the cheers grew to a crescendo.

It seemed as if the Brazilian was everybody's favorite Thursday as he prepared to race for an unprecedented third straight Indianapolis 500 victory.

Castroneves and 31 other drivers who qualified for the 500-mile event took part in the traditional "Carburetion Day" practice — the only time between the end of qualifying and the start of Sunday's race the cars are allowed on the 2 1/2-mile Indianapolis Motor Speedway oval.

"Carburetion Day" is part of a long list of Indianapolis traditions. The name was first used when Indy car engines still had carburetors and it has remained long after fuel injection was adopted.

It's the kind of tradition that Castroneves loves.

"Everything here is history and history," he said. "Everybody seems to know so much of it, and I'm learning."

Castroneves already is a part of Indy lore after becoming the first driver in 20 years — and only the fifth in 86 races — to win back-to-back at the Brickyard.

Based on his reception by the several thousand fans Thursday, a lot of people want him to get the third one. And he's thoroughly enjoying the attention.

"Crossing Gasoline Alley, guys are calling your name, they want you to autograph their kids' shirts. It's so incredible."

Castroneves said he has been able to put aside the distractions enough to get his Team Penske Dallara ready to race.

"Yes, oh yes. It seems to be working very well," he said. "The time you spend with (the car) needs to be quality time, producing, developing ideas. That's what's been successful with this team."

Castroneves also is adding to the lore of Penske Racing, the most successful team in the history of American open-wheel racing.

When he starts from the pole Sunday, it will be the record 12th time a car owned by Roger Penske has led the field to the green flag. His two Indy victories have also raised the Penske record for Brickyard wins to 12.

Kenny Brack, driving for Team Rahal, posted the fastest lap Thursday at 228.707 mph, followed by Andretti Green Racing's Robby Gordon — who will drive in both the 500 and NASCAR's Coca-Cola 600 in Concord, North Carolina on Sunday — at 227.850.

"It's been a fantastic day for us," said Brack, the 1999 Indy winner. "It's race preparation, so we've done a lot of stuff in the few laps that we've been able to run and the car seems to run fine. So, let's hope it stays the same until Sunday."

Gordon, who will try "The Double" for the fourth time, flew immediately to Concord, where rain washed out a scheduled stock car practice.

"Our main focus today was just making sure the car shifted gears, the aero balance was right and the gearing was right," Gordon said. "The car feels very good and I'm very confident.

"We've got our fingers crossed that the weather will cooperate."

The National Weather Service forecast for Sunday called for partly cloudy skies in both cities.

Gil de Ferran, Castroneves' teammate, was close behind Gordon at 227.812 mph, with former Indy Racing League champion Greg Ray and rookie Scott Dixon next at 227.790 mph and 227.714 mph.

Castroneves was sixth-fastest at 226.993 mph and was happy with what he and the team accomplished in 22 laps.

"We ran just enough laps today to make sure everything is OK for Sunday," he said. "I'm very happy with the car. It's handling well and we're in good shape for the race. Now we'll just have to stay focused and see how things play out on May 25."

Robby McGehee was the only one of the 33 starters who didn't turn a lap Thursday. McGehee was a late addition to what is now a three-car Panther Racing team, joining two-time defending IRL champion Sam Hornish Jr. and Billy Boat.

Wizards owner says he said no negative things about Jordan

WASHINGTON—Washington majority owner Abe Pollin claims he never said anything negative about Michael Jordan, whose 3 1/2-year tenure with the Wizards ended acrimoniously earlier this month.

Pollin spoke with the media following Thursday night's NBA draft lottery, when his team secured the 10th pick.

"We're talking to the future and we have great hopes for the franchise of this future," Pollin said. "We're not talking about the past. I'll only say one thing about the past. I never have said anything negative about Michael Jordan, and I never will and that closes the book on that."

JORDAN

Jordan, who led the Chicago Bulls to six NBA titles in the 1990s, was the Wizards' president from January 2000 to September 2001 before coming out of retirement to play. His record was 110-179 as the top decision-maker, a role he kept even after returning as a player. He retired at the end of the regular season.

Jordan parted ways with the Wizards when Pollin decided he didn't want Jordan back in a front office role.

"It was well understood that when I finished playing, I would return as president of basketball operations and this was definitely my desire and intention," Jordan said in a statement following the May 8 decision. "However, today, without any prior discussion with me, ownership informed me that it had unilaterally decided to change our mutual long-term understanding. I am shocked by this decision, and by the callous refusal to offer me any justification for it."

Pollin said he has spoken with people about the vacant position, plans to speak with more and expects to have one in place in time for the June 26 draft.

Judge sets trial for Olympic bid executives

SALT LAKE CITY—Two Olympic bid executives accused of using bribery to land the 2002 Winter Games are scheduled to go on trial in October.

U.S. District Court Judge David Sam scheduled the trial against Salt Lake City bid chief Tom Welch and deputy Dave Johnson in a telephone conference call Thursday with defense lawyers and U.S. Justice Department prosecutors, chief deputy court clerk Louise York said.

A pretrial conference was set for Oct. 1. The trial is expected to take three or four weeks and begins Oct. 28.

Sam, who had thrown out all charges against Welch and Johnson, was overruled April 22 by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

By setting the trial date, the semiretired judge made it clear he plans to keep the case instead of handing it off to another judge.

Welch, 58, who was president of the bid and organizing committees, and Johnson, 44, who was senior vice president, face 15 felony charges of bribery racketeering, fraud and conspiracy.

A federal grand jury accused them of plying IOC delegates in the early 1990s with $1 million in cash and gifts ranging from medical care to U.S. scholarships and jobs for family members. The scandal forced the expulsion or resignation of 10 delegates as the International Olympic Committee tightened bidding rules.

The Justice Department has said it does not plan to offer a plea bargain, which Welch and Johnson say they would not accept.

The trial could feature lawyers for Welch and Johnson trying to expose the alleged complicity of many Utah political and business leaders, who sat on a board of trustees overseeing the winning 1995 bid for the 2002 Winter Olympics.

The board's main function was to raise millions of dollars in donations for two bid campaigns run by Welch and Johnson.

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name and had already sold $2.6 billion worth of Air Jordan shoes.

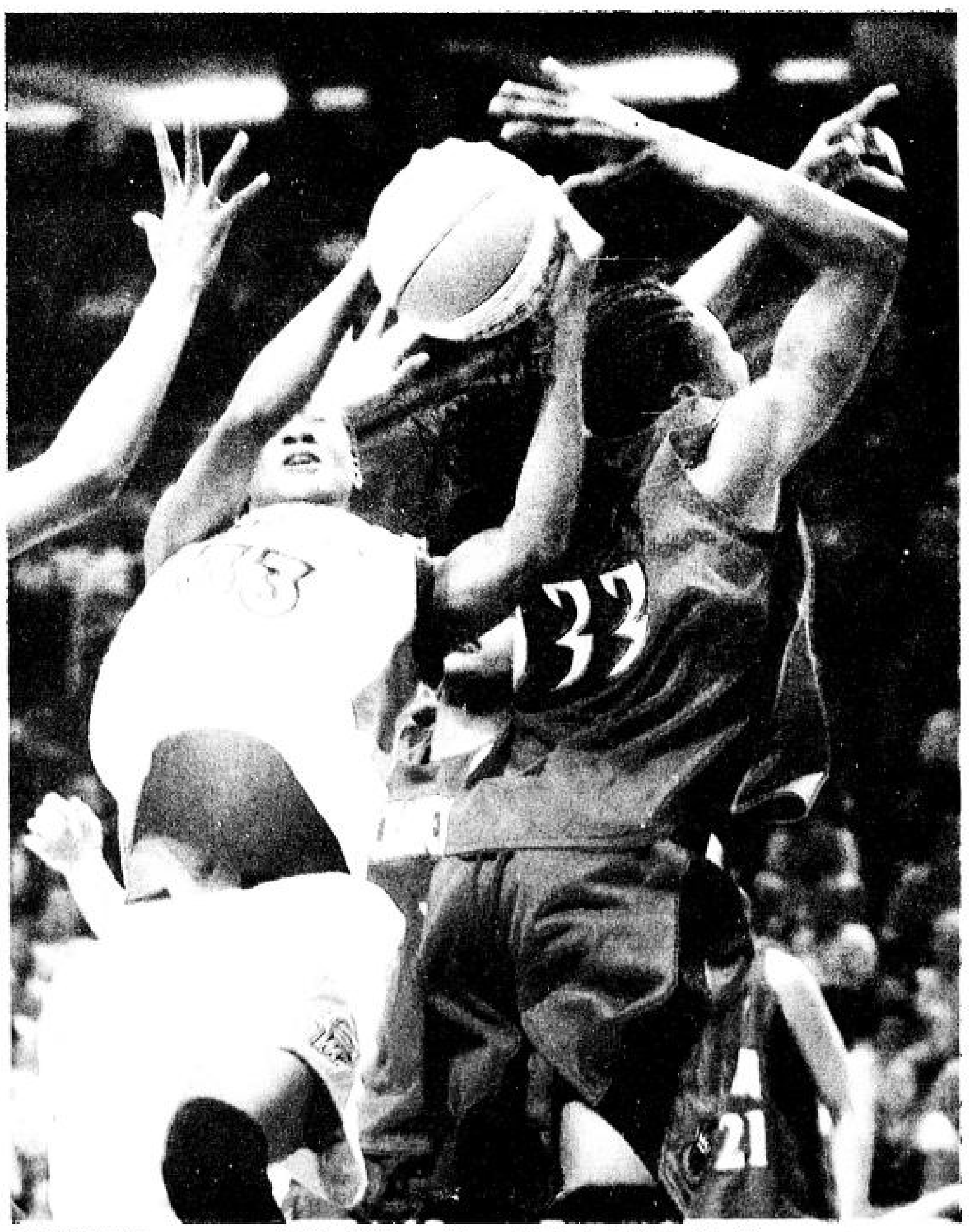
"More often than not they look like marketing geniuses at Nike; they remind me of investment banks a few years ago that put big money down on a lot of Internet companies. Many went belly up, but a few went through the roof," Carter said.

Nike paid $100 million in 2000 to sign Tiger Woods with a five-year endorsement deal that some analysts criticized as exorbitant—until Woods won his second Masters, said Jamelah Leddy, an analyst for McAdams Wright Ragen in Seattle.

Despite the obvious influence Woods has had on golf and Nike sales, it's difficult or impossible to predict exactly what kind of return on investment that Nike or other companies get for their big endorsement packages, she said. Often the goal is just making sure the competition is shut out, Leddy said.

"The Tiger deal was arguably more important, because Nike was entering the golf market and they had to establish an identity," Leddy said. "The addition of LeBron isn't necessarily as instrumental in the basketball market as Tiger was for golf, so a big part of hiring LeBron is preventing Reebok and Adidas from getting him."

AP



PHOENIX Mercury center Adrian Williams, left, and Yolanda Griffith of the Sacramento Monarchs battle for a rebound during the team's WNBA season opener in Phoenix Thursday. AP

Women's pro cage league to start using instant replay

NEW YORK—The WNBA will use instant replay to review certain plays during the final seconds of each half and overtime this season.

The policy announced Thursday is the same as the one used by the NBA this season.

Officials will be allowed to use replay to determine whether time had expired before the ball left a shooter's hand on a made field goal. It will also be used to determine if a foul was committed before time expired.

At the end of the second half, replay will only be used if the shot — or possible free throws — could affect the outcome of the game.

If a shot comes before the buzzer, officials can also determine if it's a 3-pointer or not, whether the shooter stepped out of bounds when she released the ball and whether a 30-second clock or 10-second backcourt violation occurred before the shot.

Reviews will be conducted in two minutes or less by game officials, the league said. Calls made during the play will only be reversed when replays provide a "clear and conclusive" reason.

Instant replay will be triggered automatically, not at the discretion of the officials or teams.

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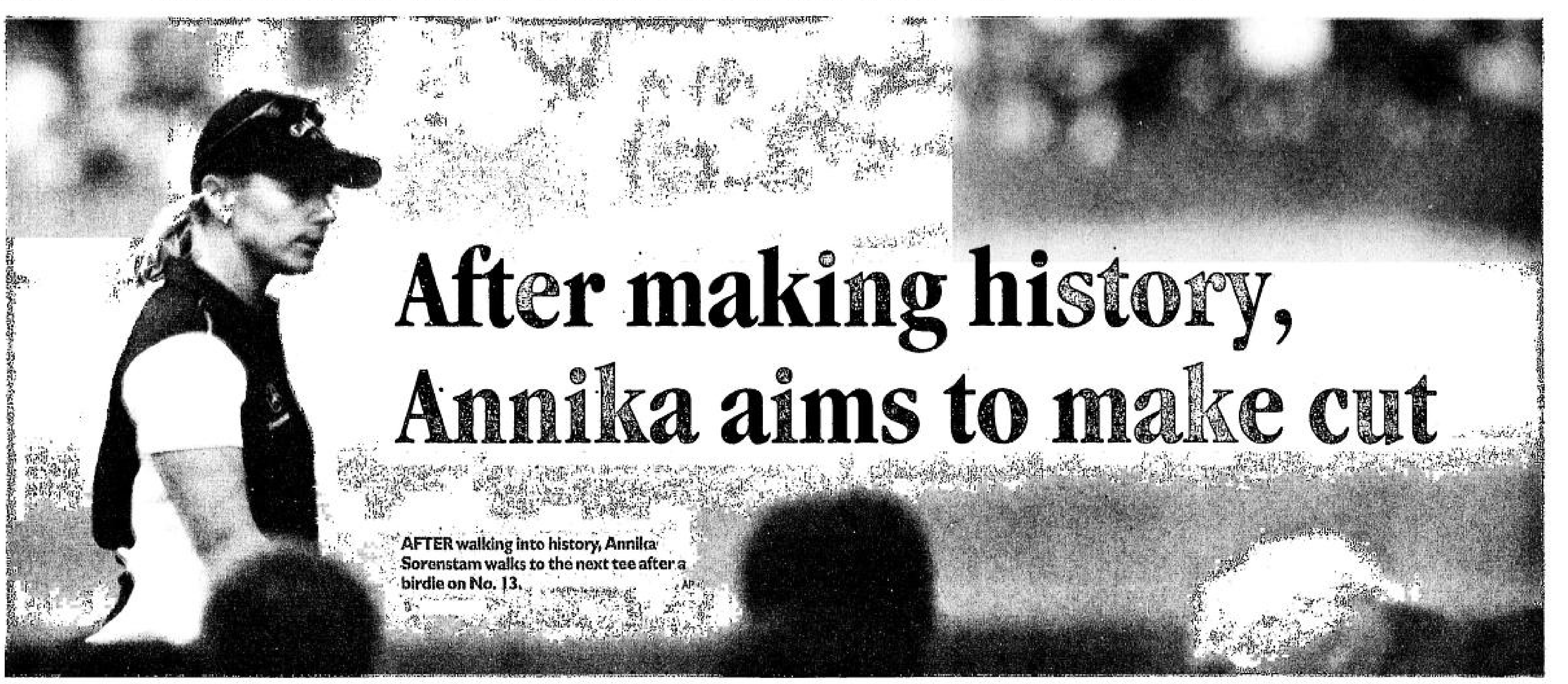


After making history, Annika aims to make cut

AFTER walking into history, Annika Sorenstam walks to the next tee after a birdie on No. 13. AP

Leader goes unnoticed at Colonial

FORT WORTH, Texas—Rory Sabbatini ended up as just a footnote on a historic day at the Colonial, even with the first-round lead at 6-under par 64.

With Sweden's Annika Sorenstam becoming the first woman in 58 years to play on the PGA Tour, and long gone by time Sabbatini finished his round in the last group off the course Thursday, the leader went pretty much unnoticed.

"It's always nice to have the lead," Sabbatini said. "If they don't notice, I don't mind. If they don't notice until Monday, that'd be even better."

Sabbatini, starting on the back nine, had birdies on his first three holes.

He added four more birdies after that, and his only bogey came at the 423-meter (470-yard) No. 5, one of the longest and toughest holes on the course where his drive went just 149 meters (165 yards). He got that stroke back with a 6-meter (20-foot) birdie putt on No. 7.

Sabbatini needed just 23 putts on a day when he hit just 10 of 18 greens and five of 14 fairways.

Sabbatini missed the cut in four of the previous eight tournaments he played in, and finished no better than 40th. *AP*

FORT WORTH, Texas—Sweden's Annika Sorenstam has already made history. Now she's trying to make the cut.

Still, no matter what happens Friday in the second round of the Colonial, the first woman to play in a PGA Tour event in 58 years has already accomplished most of what she set out to do.

"Personally, I came here to test myself. I'm very proud of the way I was focusing and the way I made decisions and stuck to them," Sorenstam said after her opening 71 Thursday. "That's why I'm here. I wanted to see if I could do it. That's all that matters to me."

At 1-over par, Sorenstam proved–at least for a round– that her game stacked up against the players on the men's tour.

"It looked like the way she's playing, she could easily compete on this level," Phil Mickelson said after his 67.

Sorenstam's first-round score was in the middle of the pack, but better than Sergio Garcia (72), Tom Lehman (73) and two dozen others. Defending champion Nick Price, who said her appearance on a sponsor's exemption "reeks of publicity," also had a 71.

Sorenstam was tied for 73rd, with the top 70 and ties advancing to the final two rounds. She played Friday afternoon, when tougher conditions were expected as the 6,372-meter (7,080-yard) layout dried out.

Rory Sabbatini took advantage of a soft course after two days of rain for an opening 64. He led by one stroke over Mark Calcavecchia and Patrick Sheehan.

With a gallery that stood a dozen deep and strained to see every shot, Sorenstam showed how she has become the most dominate female golfer in 40 years. She won 13 times in 25 tournaments around the world last year.

She missed only one fairway at Colonial. And on the four greens she missed, she was close enough to use her putter.

"She wanted to experience this Tiger mania, if you want to call it that, because she thinks that's going to help her in the future," said Jesper Parnevik, a fellow Swede.

"When she comes to the next major, it's going to be like playing a Wednesday pro-am for her. So she just wants to go through all of this and see how she handles it."

On Thursday, she handled everything like a champ.

Sorenstam might have been nervous all day– "My heart was beating, I felt a little sick in my stomach, my hands were sweaty," she said–but she never played like it. *AP*

BIRDIE PUMP: Annika Sorenstam celebrates her 13th hole birdie putt on the 13th hole. AP

LADIES' CORNING CLASSIC

With Sorenstam away, Jenny is six down despite a 70

By Jong Arcano

GALLERY PLAYER: Annika Sorenstam, with a huge gallery following her, lines up a putt on the third hole. AP

JENNY Rosales, returning to the LPGA Tour after a minor injury, upstaged her more eminent flightmate Karrie Webb with her two-under-par 70 yesterday but a very impressive scoring by the field left the Philippine star bunched in 33rd place in the Corning Classic in New York.

With the pain gone in her injured right wrist that sidelined her for nearly two weeks, Rosales showed up fresh and still hot.

Rosales, who has yet to miss the cut this season, opened up with two bogeys in her first four holes after teeing off in the back nine. It didn't take long before she got her swing in the groove, hitting four birdies–including three in a four-hole stretch from the 12th hole.

She stood six shots off solo leader Karen Stupples, who surged ahead by two over Rosie Jones, Helen Alfredsson and Michele Redman after an eight-under 64.

Fil-Am Dorothy Joy Delasin, matching par 72, was in another big group in 70th place.

The Corning Classic is being played simultaneous with The Colonial where Annika Sorenstam was re-creating history by joining the men on the US PGA Tour. Sorenstam shot a one-over 71.

Webb was just a stroke behind Rosales' group following a 71 while the third player in their flight Natalie Gulbis sizzled with a 67 and was tied for fifth.

Rosales got the green light to compete after doctors took out the cast in her right hand which she sprained before the Asahi Ryokuken Championship in South Carolina two weeks ago. She pulled out of that event and had to fly back to her base in Los Angeles to recuperate.

Sorenstam had already pledged to donate her winnings to the charities of the Corning Classic if she makes the cut at The Colonial.

Dodgers edge out Rockies for 7th straight victory

LOS ANGELES—Darren Dreifort struck out a career-high 12 batters and Brian Jordan went 3-for-3 with a tie-breaking single as the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Colorado Rockies 4-3 Thursday for their seventh straight win.

"As long as we keep everything going at the same time, I think we should keep rolling," Dreifort said.

In other games it was Montreal 8, Florida 2; New York 6, Philadelphia 3; Chicago 3, Pittsburgh 2; Atlanta 9, Cincinnati 4; and Houston 5, St. Louis 2.

At Los Angeles, Dreifort gave up three runs, two hits and four walks in six innings. In the second, when Aaron Cook (1-4) reached on a wild pitch after fanning, Dreifort became the first Dodgers pitcher to strike out four in an inning since Don Drysdale on April 17, 1965.

"They're playing good baseball," Colorado manager Clint Hurdle said. "They're pitching well, finding ways to capitalize on mistakes and putting together timely hits. That's winning baseball. Hopefully, we can get home and start playing some winning baseball of our own."

Eric Gagne worked the ninth for his 18th save. Colorado has lost 15 of 17.

"We're still looking for some opportunity where one knockout punch gets applied every now and then," Dodgers manager Jim Tracy said. "It would be nice to get that three-run homer and take the onus off our bullpen."

In Montreal, Livan Hernandez (4-2) scattered seven hits in his first complete game for the Expos and Endy Chavez hit a three-run double in a four-run second as Montreal completed a three-game sweep of Florida.

Hernandez struck out four, walked one and had an RBI single for Montreal, which has swept six series this season.

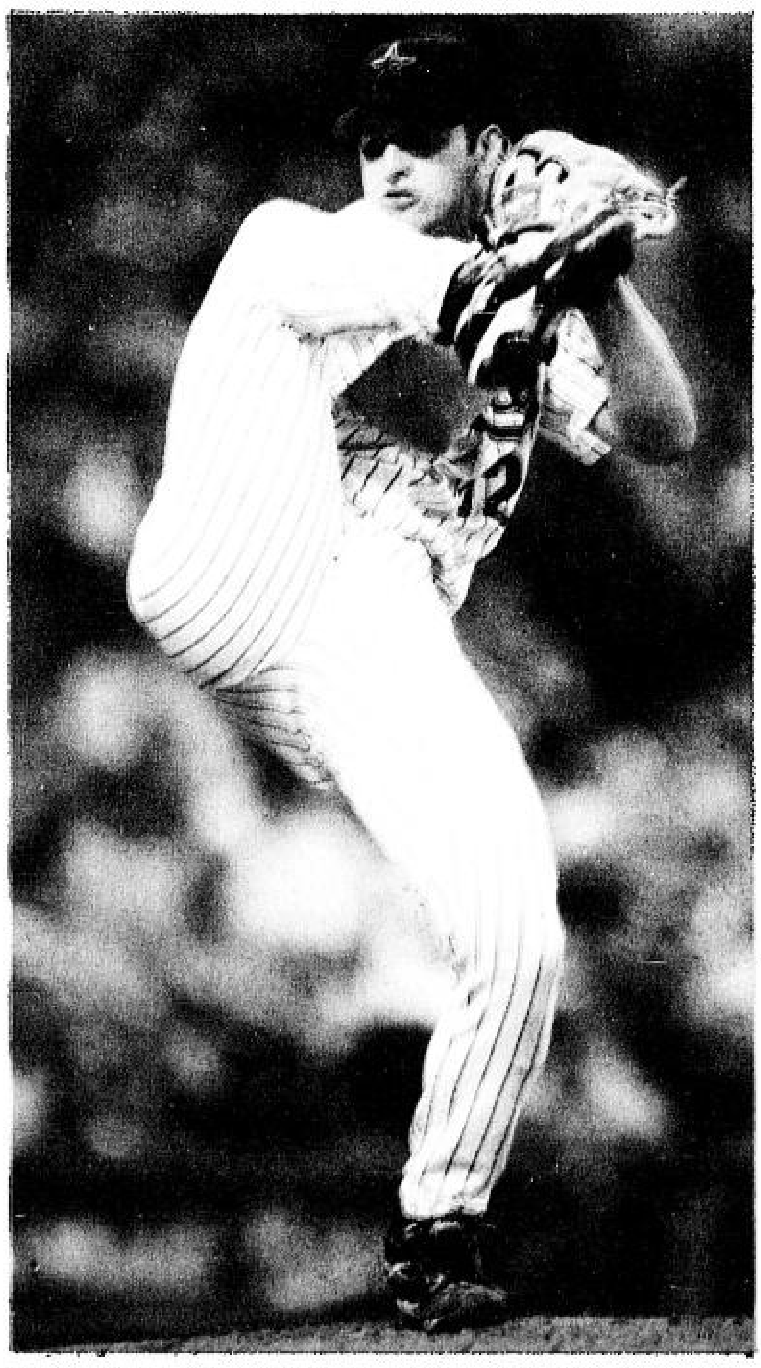
Florida has lost six straight games, dropping to 3-7 under new manager Jack McKeon. Michael Tejera allowed seven runs and nine hits in four-plus innings.

In New York, pinch-hitter Timo Perez delivered a two-out, two-run double off Vincente Padilla (3-6) that broke a 3-all tie in the sixth inning and gave New York a win over Philadelphia.

Pedro Astacio (3-1) gave up five hits but was in frequent trouble, allowing the leadoff man to reach base in four of six innings.

David Weathers and Armando Benitez finished the pitching, with Benitez getting his 13th save.

In Pittsburgh, Tom Goodwin, getting an infrequent start, hit a go-ahead solo homer in the ninth inning off Scott Sauerbeck (0-4), his 24th career homer in 14 seasons, as Chicago beat Pittsburgh. *AP*



WIND-UP: Houston Astros starting pitcher Jerome Robertson kicks high for a wind-up in the fourth inning against the St. Louis Cardinals Thursday. AP

Blue Jays crush NY Yankees, 8-3

NEW YORK—Carlos Delgado homered twice and drove in five runs Thursday as the Toronto Blue Jays sent Andy Pettitte to his career-worst fourth straight loss, beating the New York Yankees, 8-3.

Along with dropping their fourth straight game at Yankee Stadium, the American League East leading New York learned center fielder Bernie Williams will miss at least a month because of a bad knee and watched Jorge Posada limp off after being hit by a pitch.

"Right now, we're not firing on all cylinders," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "Now the injuries are creeping in. But there's no question we have the personnel here to win."

There's still no definitive word on Roger Clemens, either. He has a bone bruise after being hit in the right hand by a line drive Wednesday, and had X-rays and an MRI exam.

Clemens is scheduled to throw in the bullpen Friday. If he's OK, he'll try for his 300th career win Monday at home against Boston.

"It hasn't changed unless they tell me something different," he said.

Carlos Delgado homered and drove in five runs as the Blue Jays sent Andy Pettitte to his career-worst fourth straight loss.

Before the game, the Yankees found out that Williams would likely be sidelined four-to-six weeks because of torn cartilage in his left knee.

Last weekend, first baseman and designated hitter Nick Johnson was put on the disabled list because of a stress fracture in his right hand. He's also expected to miss four-to-six weeks.

Posada left after twice being hit by pitches, one in the right knee and then on the right foot. The catcher said he hopes to play Friday.

The Yankees have lost eight of their last nine at Yankee Stadium.

Roy Halladay won his fifth straight start, backed by the Blue Jays' bats. Shannon Stewart homered and drove in three runs and Vernon Wells had three hits.

"Our club's been scoring a lot of runs," Toronto manager Carlos Tosca said. "The Yankees haven't been clicking lately like they were the first time we came in here. Of course, not having Bernie Williams in the lineup makes a difference." *AP*

SPORTS noodle

Answers from page A26

1. False (American football)
2. Nora Aunor
3. Kevin Costner
4. Medalyang Ginto (where she played herself)
5. 1924 Paris Games
6. Eddie Felson
7. Chuck Wepner

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FIGHT FOR NO. 1

Andre, Lleyton take duel to Paris

PARIS—Both men are locked in a tight battle for the accolade of best player in the world.

And if Lleyton Hewitt wants to preserve his current lead over Andre Agassi, having displaced his rival only this week in the ATP entry system rankings, the Adelaider faces having to slog through seven best of five set matches on the strength-sapping red clay of Roland Garros.

Agassi briefly bundled Hewitt out of the pole position the Australian had enjoyed for 75 weeks but in going out early in Rome and not playing Hamburg he is now second to his young rival while still topping the ATP Champions Race, the guide to season form.

The 22-year-old Hewitt has yet really to prove himself on clay while Agassi, despite his curtailed build-up, arrives in the City of light with the US Men's Clay Court Championship title in his pocket–to say nothing of the 1999 French Open title.

With the quasi-retirement of Pete Sampras, Agassi, who dumped Hewitt in last year's US Open semifinal, is now the elder statesman among the men and his record is the benchmark for allcomers.

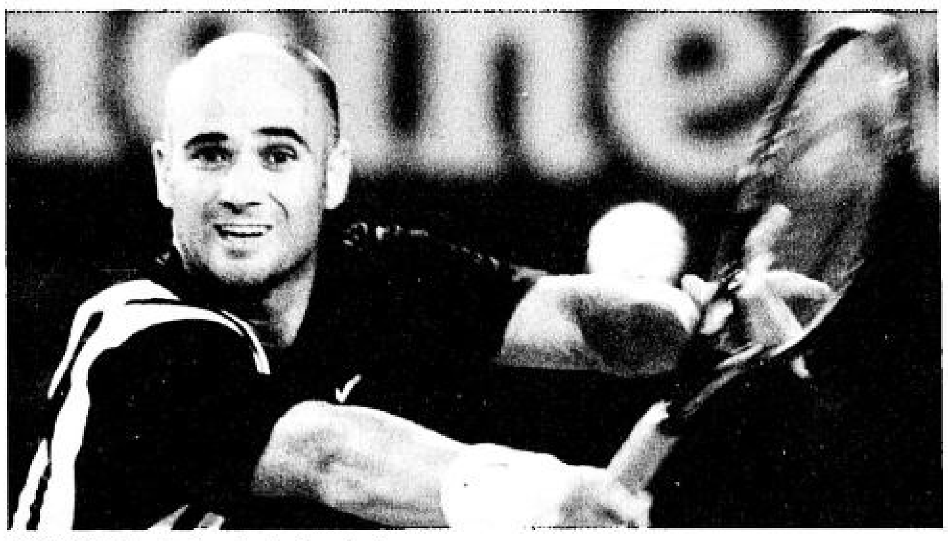
This year he will play his 16th French Open.

The 33-year-old, the oldest man ever to top the standings, has won 58 titles–four of which have come this year, including the Australian Open.

Hewitt's comparative figures are 19 and two–but he gave Agassi a 12-year start.

In the process Agassi has snapped up 27 million dollars prizemoney–which will come in handy when wife Steffi Graf has their second child. *AFP*

HEWITT finds his clay court feet again. AP



AGASSI tries to turn back the clock. AP

Serena vs Venus once more?

PARIS—The field of favorites for recent women's Grand Slam titles has been a narrow one–but at this year's Roland Garros it's by no means a foregone conclusion that the champion will be called Williams.

Serena and Venus have dominated the scene over the past two years and Serena has notched up four Slams in a row –largely at her sister's expense, notably preventing her elder sibling from notching up a Wimbledon hattrick of singles crowns last year.

Serena has to date posted 16 wins for three losses on the slow red Parisian clay but she has proved she can be fallible on the surface in losing the Charleston title last month to Belgian Justine Henin-Hardenne before going down in the semifinals at the Italian Open to French former Australian Open finalist Amelie Mauresmo.

While Serena has flourished there are question marks against the long-term future of Venus after she pulled out of the German Open with a pulled stomach muscle, having also missed out Rome.

With just four WTA Tour events under her belt this season Venus now comes to Roland Garros short on match practice and without a title since Antwerp in February.

The injury problems followed hot on the heels of a hammering from compatriot Meghann Shaughnessy in Miami, whereupon Venus said she would have a month off.

"My plan is to take each day at a time, have some rest, and be fit again as soon as possible," she explained on pulling out of Berlin.

As Serena bids to keep the 'Williams Show' on the road Belgian fans have high hopes that this year will be their year in the women's singles. *AFP*

Montgomery withdraws from Prefontaine meet

EUGENE, Oregon—Tim Montgomery withdrew from the 100 meters at the Prefontaine Classic because of Achilles' tendinitis.

During workouts this week, the world record holder discovered he could not sprint all-out without risking greater injury. His spot in Saturday's race was offered to American J.J. Johnson, who had the world's sixth-fastest time last year (9.95 seconds).

Montgomery set the world mark of 9.78 last September.

Also in the race is Dwain Chambers of Britain, who has the second-fastest time in history (9.87).

Chang bids adieu to French Open

PARIS—Michael Chang toured the world with his racket for the better part of two decades, winning big matches in front of big crowds.

The successes and spectators are scarcer this season, his last: About 100 people saw Chang lose at a minor league event in Forest Hills, New York, this month.

Ah, but he'll always have Paris. Chang won the 1989 French Open at 17, still the record for youngest male champion at a Grand Slam tournament, and along the way he beat Ivan Lendl in one of the greatest comebacks in tennis history.

Now 31, Chang will play on Roland Garros' red clay for the final time.

"It's always a good feeling to be back there, playing on the same courts, rekindling memories of those good shots and those tough matches," he said. "You always want to do well. Particularly the last time, it would be nice to win a few matches."

He'll find out his first-round opponent in Friday's draw. The biggest question is whether defending champion Serena Williams and her sister, Venus, will be on the same half of the women's bracket. That would end any chance of a fifth straight major final between them.

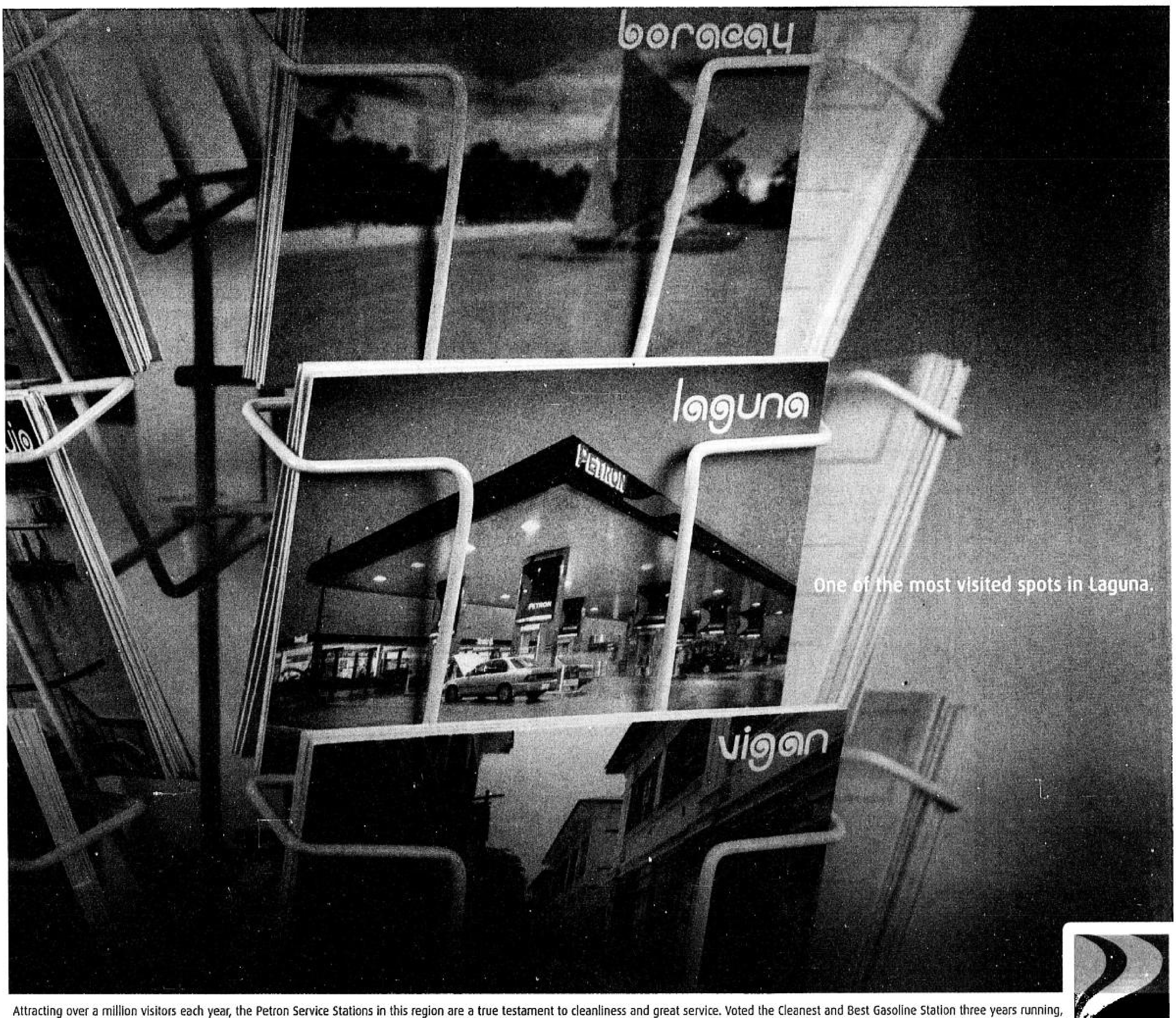
Among the men, Wimbledon champion Lleyton Hewitt is seeded No. 1, with eight-time Grand Slam titlist Andre Agassi second, and defending champ Albert Costa ninth.

Chang, of course, isn't seeded at all. Playing a limited schedule, he's won just one ATP Tour match all year, is ranked 142nd, and he needed a wild-card invitation to get into his 15th straight French Open.

How long has Chang been around? His first trip to the French Open ended with a third-round loss to John McEnroe.

Chang's breakthrough came a year later, when he became the first American to win at Roland Garros since Tony Trabert in 1955. In doing so, he collected the first major title for what would become a star-studded generation of US men: Chang, Agassi, Pete Sampras and Jim Courier.

Alas, it was also Chang's last major title (he lost three other Grand Slam finals). *AP*



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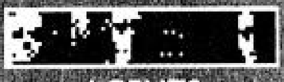
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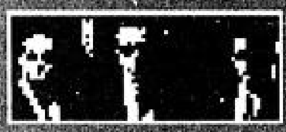
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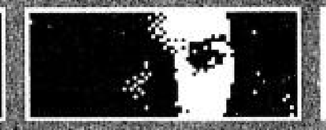
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INDICATORS

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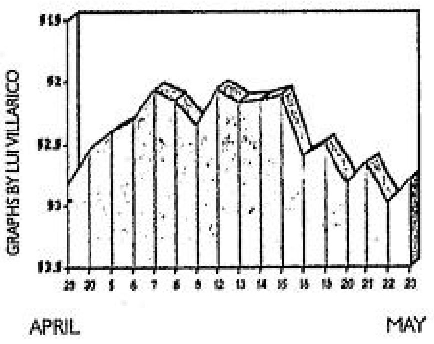


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 52.79 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2003

¥ 117.28 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2003

GOLD: $366.00-366.50

per ounce Hong Kong, May 23, 2003

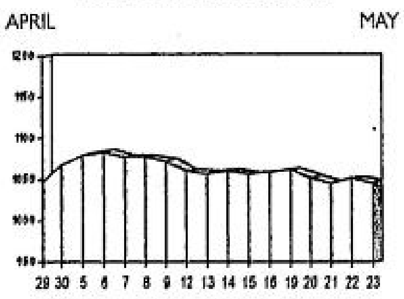
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end weaker

SHARES closed lower yesterday in light trade as investors turned cautious due to worries over the peso, which has been weighed down by a volatile yen.

Traders said there was a general lack of appetite to buy stocks with a dearth of market-moving news. Most investors were also waiting for the government's official release of its first-quarter economic performance next week for firmer signals.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

The Philippine stock index slid 4.10 points, or 0.39 percent at 1,047.34 points, losing 1.15 percent week on week.

"Generally, there hasn't been that much incentive to participate in the market," said Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc.

"The peso may also be contributing to the non-activity in the mar-

STOCKS/ B3

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE FREEDOM from Debt Coalition yesterday renewed its call for the government to cancel its contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) beginning with that of the $700-million Casecnan irrigation and power project.

The University of the Philippines-based think tank said the Supreme Court decision to nullify the contract to build the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 had set the precedent for other onerous deals.

FDC claimed that like the $650-million contract with Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), the Casecnan contract was grossly overpriced and was given direct guarantee.

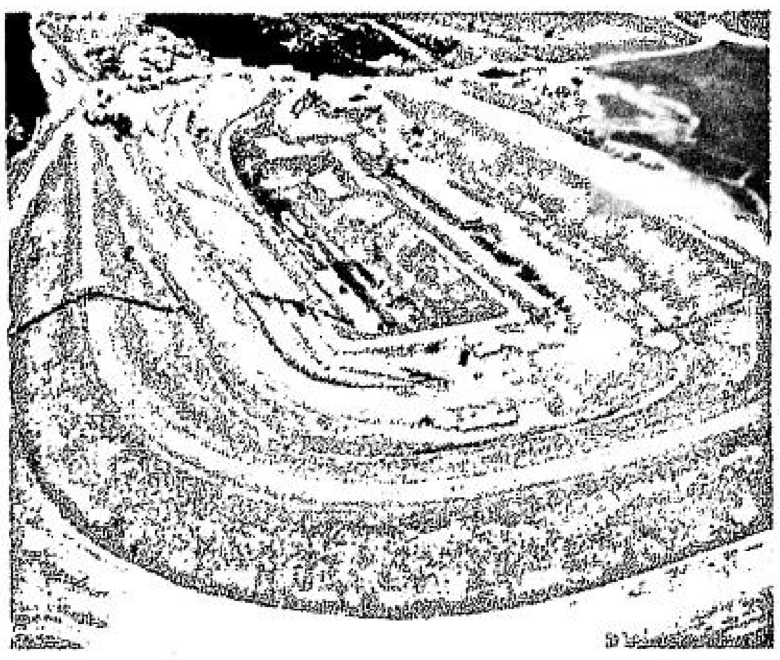
The group added that the Casecnan contract was given a direct guarantee contrary to the Build-Operate-Transfer law—the very reason why the Supreme Court voided the Piatco contract.

Aside from that, FDC said that project proponent CalEnergy International was given "unreasonable guaranteed profit."

FDC explained that the Casecnan contract committed that the government:

- through the National Irrigation Administration, pay for 801.9 million cubic meters of water a year whether or not the amount was actually delivered, and
- through the state-owned National Power Corp., buy 19 million kilowatt-hours a month

GOV'T/ B3



THE TAILRACE section of the 26-km tunnel of the Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project.

BIR uncovers rampant VAT payment violations

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has uncovered the rampant practice of claiming excessive input value-added credits by companies in various industries.

A BIR official said that since the bureau implemented its computerized auditing system in the last quarter of 2002, it has already detected 2,000 firms whose input VAT claims exceed their actual credits.

According to Deputy Commissioner Estelita Aguirre, these firms' declared amount of input VAT credits was higher than the combined amount of output VAT payments of their suppliers.

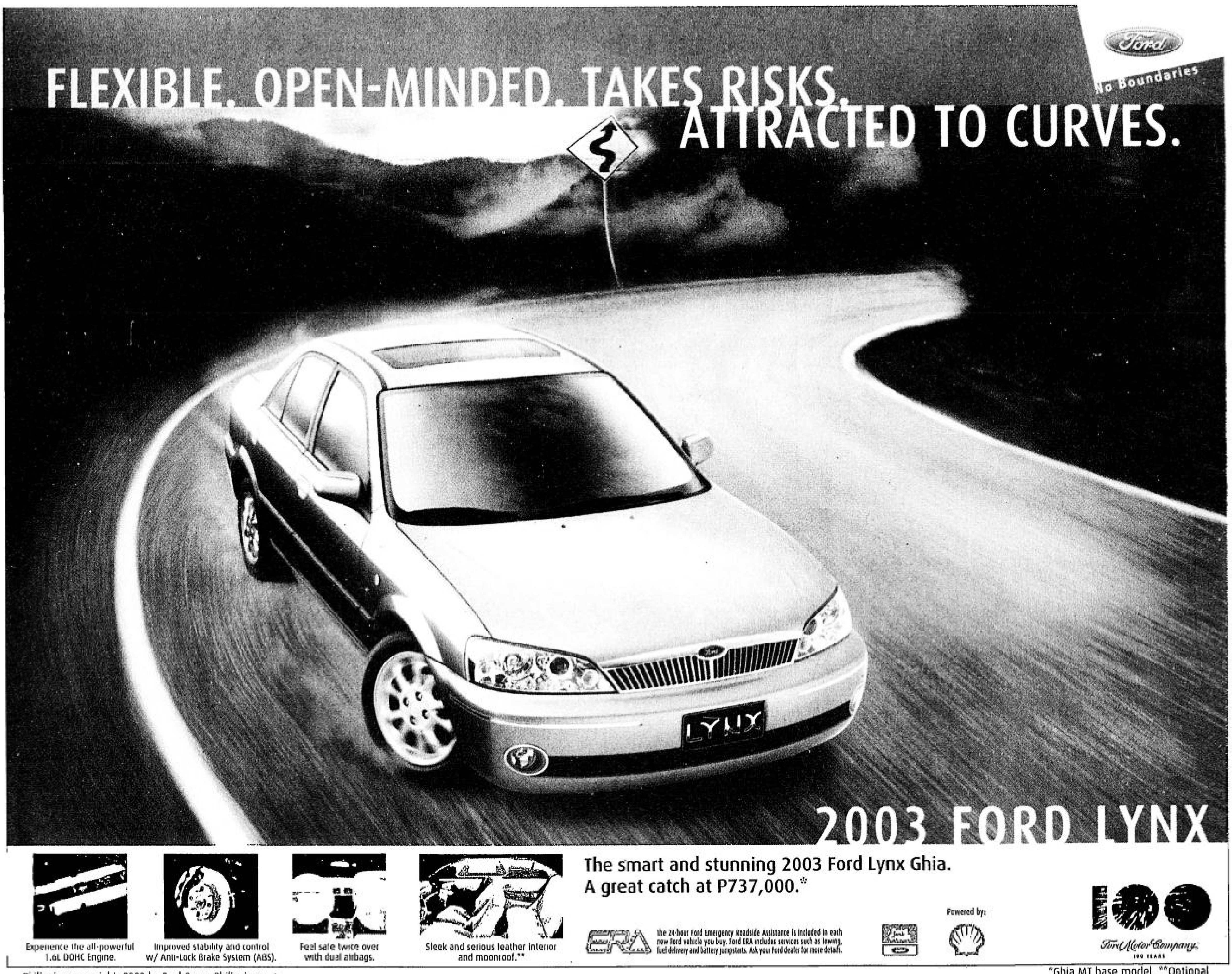
"The input tax of a purchaser should be equal to the output tax of the sellers. Therefore, if the numbers don't match, you can say that there is an excessive claim of input VAT credits. Discrepancies are now easily detected by the BIR because the computer system can easily bring those out," Aguirre said.

The BIR official said the bureau's ongoing analysis of the accuracy of input VAT claims of businesses has yet to cover a larger number of taxpayers, but that the number of erring VAT taxpayers from among those that have already been checked was substantial.

"We have already sent them (the firms) a notice which requires them to pay their actual tax liabilities," Aguirre said.

She added that should the

BIR/ B3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BOI backs Senate auto tax proposal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments is now endorsing a proposed compromise agreement in the Senate to raise the price cap from P500,000 to P750,000 of automobiles that would be taxed the minimum rate of 3 percent under the new automotive tax system.

In a statement, BOI Managing Head Gregory L. Domingo said: "I am fully supportive of Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III's search for a scheme that would provide more affordable vehicles to a broader segment of consumers and at the same time preserve or improve the government's tax collection position."

Earlier, Domingo said the move would lead to a substantial reduction in the projected tax collection from the new automotive excise taxes.

Domingo had also noted that the Department of Finance would object to the changes in the draft bill where vehicles below P500,000 would be slapped 3 percent while vehicles worth between P500,000 and P1 million have to pay an excise tax of P15,000 plus 15 percent of the value in excess of P500,000.

Domingo claimed that Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II had instructed the BOI to make the cap as high as possible. The BOI had endorsed a P500,000 cap in the draft bill it presented to Congress.

An increase in the floor price would broaden the number of models that would enjoy the minimum 3-percent tax rate to include not only entry-level sedans but also compact cars, Asian utility vehicles and basic pick-up models.

This is likely to impact on the DOF's projection of P1.14 billion yearly increase in revenue from the automotive tax reforms that will abolish the tax exemption on 10-seater vehicles and shift the tax basis from engine size to value.

Aside from raising the base price, Domingo said the BOI was supportive of a Senate proposal to maintain the tax rate on luxury vehicles or models worth more than P2 million each at 100 percent in contrast to the DOF's position to lower the tax rate to 50 percent.

Looking at Filipino farmers as scientists

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez, Ph.D.

COMMENTARY

LAST Sunday, May 17, I went to UP Los Baños (UPLB) to have an informal discussion with two eminent scientists from the opposing sides of the Bt corn issue. Dr. Emiliana Bernardo, former UPLB vice chancellor who also serves on the Scientific Technical Research Panel—tasked by the Department of Agriculture (DA) to review this matter—said the benefits of Bt corn outweighed its risks. Dr. Oscar Zamora, former UPLB agronomy department chair, disagreed citing research studies that showed the dangers posed by Bt corn. Since Dr. Bernardo had not been provided these studies, she said she would look into that immediately. There was no agreement reached that afternoon on the technical issues.

On the legal issues, both agreed to let the lawyers address the alleged violation of two laws in the BT corn approval process. One is the Seed Industry Development Act (RA 7308), which requires a procedure for establishing seed standards (Section 10). The other is the Philippine Environmental Policy (PD 1151), which requires an environmental impact assessment (Section 4).

A successful approach

It was at this time that Dr. Romulo Davide, UPLB professor emeritus and an Agriwatch board member, joined our discussion. Dr. Davide won the Gawad Saka Outstanding Agricultural Scientist award in 1994. He is also the brother of Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide and so, we joked, he must have come from a good stock.

Dr. Davide described an approach on corn productivity that did not use Bt corn and yet had tremendous success. It is supported by an eight-year track record that has been verified repeatedly by several studies. In the town of Argao, at least 25 of its 45 barangays have already benefited from this approach. Corn yield had increased from the average 0.5 ton per hectare to 3-6 tons. In applying this approach, other farm products such as vegetables are also grown to increase a farmer's income. The June 2002 survey of 179 Argao beneficiaries showed that those covered had their annual income increased by almost three-fold from P8,137 to P21,950. For 17 farmers who broke out of the poverty line, their average annual income increased from P32,882 to P90,820, also a three-fold increase. The smallest increase was shown by Gracias Sanvera of Barangay Bayabas whose income increased from P20,000 to P40,000. The largest was by Agustin Sejuela of Barangay San Mapuan whose income went up from P6,000 to P110,000. Evidence of the better life was shown by the construction of new houses using hollow blocks, replacing nipa huts, purchase of refrigerators and TV sets, and the sending of the farmers' children to college.

Farmer scientists

The intervention that has shown such significant success is the farmer scientist approach. Dr. Davide suggests looking at the farmer not just as an unthinking tiller of the soil but as a scientist. He said his father once told him: "There are no barren soils, just barren minds." Dr. Davide also subscribes to the definition of "scientist" from the American Journal of Science: "He watches things. He reads. He finds out how things work and how they can be made better. He wonders. He experiments. He finds out what is true. He sees wonderful things have indeed happened."

Three phases

Wonderful things have happened because of the Farmer Scientist Training Program (FSTP). This program is executed in three phases:

1. The first phase concentrates on value formation and technical empowerment. The farmer is taught to do things not only for himself but also for God, other people, and the country. With this value system, he is then shown new technologies, their benefits, and how to apply them.

2. The second phase is own-farm experimentation and technology adoption. This is very different from purely classroom training which often results in failure. The farmer applies what he has learned in the first phase right on his farm. He experiments on different methods and discusses these with other farmer scientists. Together, they learn from each other and formulate action plans for their respective farms.

3. The third phase is farmer-to-farmer research and development and technology transfer. The newly trained farmer scientist, practicing the value system learned in the first phase which includes doing things for others, now transfers the technologies he has learned to other farmers. This is done with the guidance of extension personnel from the LGUs, the DA, the research centers and the appropriate state universities and colleges.

Conclusion

The results of this farmer scientist approach have been phenomenal. Argao has transformed itself from a fourth-class to a third-class municipality which, according to Mayor Wilfredo Caminero, has been largely due to the farmer scientist program. The fertile minds of the farmer scientists have transformed Argao's barren soils to productive agriculture areas. In rocky areas and stony ground, one can see corn growing because of the creative interventions done by the farmers themselves. There is a spirit of pride, unity, and hope that permeates the community.

The farmer scientist approach should be replicated throughout the country. This approach can be used not only for corn but other products as well. The paradigm of the farmer merely as a tiller of soil will then be changed to a farmer scientist who increases his family's income, improves his community's welfare, and more effectively feeds the nation.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative, and former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatch@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 23, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4	4	4	16,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15	15.25	15	15.25	156,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	34	34.5	33.5	33.5	331,700
China Banking Corp.	690	690	690	690	100
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.75	47,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26	25	25.5	101,700
Prudential Bank	225	225	225	225	50
Philippine National Bank	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	7,100
Security Bank Corp.	10	10	10	10	20,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	4,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	200	200	200	200	400
Manulife Financial Corp.	1400	1430	1400	1430	350
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1050	1050	1050	1,250
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.73	0.73	3,980,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	560	575	560	570	78,600
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.04	14,900,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	1,160,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	330,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	425	427.5	422.5	422.5	101,170
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	7,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	33,000
Manila Electric Co. B	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.7	104,000
Petron Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.02	2.06	12,497,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	100,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	327,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	30,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	18,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	650,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4.75	4.75	4.7	4.7	20,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	40,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	14,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	25.5	25.5	16,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.75	382,200
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55	54.5	55	61,000
San Miguel Corp. B	65	65	64	64.5	47,400
Universal Robina Corp.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	156,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	2,693,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	268,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	2,500,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.78	1.78	280,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	650,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	2,340,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.16	700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.205	0.21	860,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	140,000
Ionics Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.61	0.61	170,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.44	1,170,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	220,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,000,000
Music Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	170,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.55	60,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	90,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	500,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	20,000
Mondragon Intl Phils, Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.44	4,200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	30,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	985,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.81	8,900,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.65	359,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	5,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.14	0.145	0.13	0.13	120,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	688,150	19,780,275.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	61,437,370	153,972,930.00
PRO	10,505,000	13,688,750.00
Mining	5,503,000	124,500.00
OIL	1,120,000	30,200.00
GRAND TOTALS:	79,253,520	187,596,655.00

AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	341.42	DOWN 2.98
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,565.05	UP 0.55
PRO	424.24	DOWN 7.80
Mining	1,220.01	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.17	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	681.29	UP 1.18
Composite	1,047.34	DOWN 4.10

NO. OF ADVANCES: 12; NO. OF DECLINES: 34; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 29; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 75; NO. OF TRADES: 1,082

Lenders extend repayment of FGHC debt

LENDERS of a subsidiary of the Lopez family's First Philippine Holdings Corp. have agreed in principle to extend the repayment date for a $70-million debt to June 30 this year from last May 22.

FGHC International, a wholly owned subsidiary of FPHC registered in the Cayman Islands, made a partial payment on its $70-million debt amounting to $10 million plus interest up to May 22 this year.

"FPHC expects to generate sufficient funds to answer for the obligations under the facility by means of dividends and through FGHC International's issuance of short-term notes in the principal amount of $35 million to AIMCF (Cayman Islands) Ltd. as disclosed last April 30, 2003," FPHC assistant information officer Rodlofo Waga Jr. said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Waga also explained that the proposed $35 million in short-term notes would likewise allow another set of investors to purchase additional guaranteed notes also of $35 million.

In the meantime, Waga disclosed that FGHC International settled, also on May 22, its obligations involving $5 million in floating rate notes.

Elena R. Torrijos

US still open to RP request for higher garments quota

WASHINGTON has kept its "doors open" to a Philippine request for an increase in its garments export quota to the United States, which had earlier doubled the allocation of Vietnam's apparel makers.

In a statement, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said he had met a few days ago with US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick who had said he was keeping an open mind to the Philippines' request for a higher quota.

"We have requested to have our quotas re-evaluated in the light of Vietnam's situation and the remaining time left before the end of the quota regime in 2005," Roxas said.

Philippine apparel makers were apprehensive after the United States agreed to grant Vietnam additional quota equivalent to 17 million dozens of cotton T-shirts and 7 million dozens of pants. In contrast, the Philippines' quota is pegged at 3.6 million dozens of cotton T-shirts and 3.5 million dozens of pants.

Roxas said the Philippines' goal was for the Philippines' garments exporters to maintain their current buyers in the United States while creating opportunities to increase exports under the quota system and during the transition phase in the next 18 months.

Roxas said the Philippines had likewise sought a more flexible system for the swapping of US garments and textile quotas among Asian countries to allow each country to maximize its allocations.

Philippine exports of garments and textiles jumped 19.25 percent to $714.741 million in the first quarter of the year from $599.355 million a year ago due to a rush of orders from quota markets such as the United States and Europe.

Sales to the US, the world's biggest buyer of clothes and textiles, rose 21.27 percent to $529.728 million in the first three months this year from $436.831 million during the same period last year as more American buyers shifted to the Philippines and other countries that were least affected by SARs in the region.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DISCLOSURES

SOLID Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 24, 3 p.m. at the Fairways of Manila Golf & Country Club, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of May 19 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

APEX Mining Co. Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 25, 9 a.m. at the Valle Verde Country Club, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of May 30 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

MEGAWORLD Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 30, 9 a.m. at the Eastwood Information Centre, E Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Quezon City. Stockholders of record as of May 15 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

FILINVEST Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 11, 9 a.m. at the FCC Marketing Office, Filinvest Corporate City, Muntinlupa City. Stockholders of record as of April 30 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

REPUBLIC Cement Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 27, 4 p.m. at the Mondragon House, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of May 31 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

EDSA Properties Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 26, 2:30 p.m. at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Record date is May 27.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 3, 4 p.m. at the 3/F Cityland Condominium 10, Tower II, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of May 4 are entitled to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

SEC tightening rules on leisure clubs

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has tightened the screws on proprietary leisure clubs in view of the rising complaints from investors over arbitrary increases in fees and uncompleted projects.

Under the draft rules recommended for the Commission's approval, proceeds from the sale of club shares should be escrowed and the withdrawal of which could be made only upon presentation of the company's work progress report.

There are around 200 leisure clubs registered with the SEC, including golf clubs, time share operations and resorts.

Leisure clubs will also be required to post performance bonds to ensure that their proposed projects will be completed.

Also, the SEC is considering allowing leisure clubs to collect 50 percent of monthly membership fees only if their projects already have the basic amenities and some operational facilities. A 100-percent collection of the membership fees would be allowed only if the projects were fully completed.

Under the draft rules, registrants will be required to ensure that prospective investors are qualified to be members before actual sale of shares is executed.

Leisure club's officers, according to the SEC, must report any increase in fees and the rationale for the increase within 30 days after board approval. Club members should also be notified of the increase before billing.

For the benefit of secondary markets, proper notices and other communications on the charging of fees must be posted on the bulletin boards situated at conspicuous places in the leisure clubs.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista earlier said that leisure clubs were being charged with monthly dues even while there were no facilities yet although by-laws of the clubs allowed them to make the collections.

INTEREST RATES

May 23, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 23-May-03 (%)	MART1 22-May-03 (%)
1 Month	7.3039	7.3039
3 Months	7.25	7.2596
6 Months	8.2771	8.3104
1 Year	8.5885	8.6096
2 Years	9.2962	9.3423
3 Years	10.2327	10.2981
4 Years	10.8769	10.9135
5 Years	11.3096	11.3462
7 Years	11.7269	11.7289
10 Years	11.8788	11.9019
20 Years	12.7577	12.7596
25 Years	13.2615	13.2635

SOURCE : MART/BLOOMBERG

CURRENCIES

May 23, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.854409	1.000000	52.862000
Japan	Yen	0.007292	0.008535	0.451200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.397215	1.635300	86.445200
Hongkong	Dollar	0.109557	0.128225	6.778200
Switzerland	Franc	0.660234	0.772738	40.848500
Canada	Dollar	0.621795	0.727749	38.470300
Singapore	Dollar	0.496000	0.580518	30.687300
Australia	Dollar	0.562185	0.657981	34.782200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.266457	2.652661	140.225000
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.227837	0.266660	14.096200
Brunei	Dollar	0.494564	0.578838	30.598500
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000120	0.006300
Thailand	Baht	0.020391	0.023866	1.261600
UAE	Dirham	0.232638	0.272279	14.393200
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.170400	61.869700
Argentina	Peso	0.299792	0.350877	18.548100
Brazil	Real	0.286522	0.335345	17.727000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134675	0.157624	8.332300
India	Rupee	0.018253	0.021363	1.129300
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224874	0.263193	13.912900
Mexico	New Peso	0.083292	0.097485	5.153300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.497937	0.582785	30.807200
Norway	Kroner	0.127470	0.149191	7.886500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014833	0.017361	0.917700
South Africa	Rand	0.109226	0.127838	6.757800
Korea	Won	0.000715	0.000837	0.044200
Sweden	Kroner	0.109204	0.127812	6.756400
Syria	Pound	0.020343	0.023810	1.258600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024715	0.028927	1.529100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000536	0.000627	0.033100

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No risk of deflation in Europe

MADRID—European Union Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes said on Thursday he saw no threat of deflation in Europe and repeated that he was more concerned about the speed of the euro's rise than its actual level.

The single currency is currently trading just below its January 1999 launch level of $1.1747, having stormed higher this year.

Asked if there was a risk of deflation in Europe as regional economies remain sluggish and consumers seem reluctant to spend, Solbes replied: "I do not think so." "If we look at the evolution of prices and salaries, the average growth in wages in Europe is around 3 percent, which does not give me the impression we will have deflation problems here in Europe," he added.

Falling prices in Japan, together with a recent comment by Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan that deflation posed a minor threat to the US economy, have led some economists to wonder whether deflation could spread to Europe.

Figures released earlier this month showed that growth in euro zone economy as a whole was flat in the first three months of 2003, while the economies of Germany, Italy and the Netherlands shrank.

Data showing a 0.2-percent fall in first-quarter gross domestic product (GDP) in Germany should be analyzed with caution as they reflected circumstances before the Iraq war ended, Solbes said.

"This (data) does not substantially change the scenario which we have for the evolution of the European economy at this time," he added. *Reuters*

Dollar flat but shares up

SINGAPORE—The threat of Japanese intervention kept the dollar on an even keel in Asian trade on Friday as share markets in the region blossomed in the wake of a rise on Wall Street.

Oil prices steadied after falling on news that the UN Security Council had voted to end sanctions on Iraq and allow it to resume exporting oil while disappointing US jobs data supported gold prices.

Trade in many markets was muted ahead of the long weekend in both the United States and Britain, with investors reluctant to carry positions into the holiday. Monday is Memorial Day in the United States and a bank holiday in Britain.

Asian stock markets however had a rare day in the sun.

Japan's Nikkei index was up 1.56 percent at mid-session, powered higher by a 0.9-percent gain in the Dow Jones industrial average and hopes that measures to boost the economy could come up at a summit later in the day between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and US President George W. Bush.

The gain in New York was driven by investor hopes of an economic recovery this year.

The enthusiasm spread across the Pacific, with Australian stocks up almost one percent at midday, Hong Kong up 1.4 percent, Singapore up 1.3 percent, Taiwan up 1.6 percent and South Korea up over 2 percent.

"There are reasons to be a bit more optimistic, not ragingly so, but I think the worst of investor depression is over," said Hans Kunnen, head of investment markets research at Colonial First State in Sydney.

The United States reported jobless claims increased in the latest week, triggering another bout of weakness in the dollar.

However, in Asian trade, the fear of Japanese intervention kept the greenback within a tight range.

"Although US stocks are performing well, forex market participants appear to be reacting to weak US macroeconomic figures and selling the dollar," said Kosuke Hanao, head of forex sales at Royal Bank of Scotland in Tokyo. *Reuters*

Fed's Olson forecasts robust US growth

BLOOMINGTON, Minnesota—Federal Reserve Governor Mark Olson on Thursday said the stage is set for robust US economic growth, but he questioned the timing of such a pick-up and raised concerns over a prolonged slump in business spending.

"I believe that although the economy still faces substantial risks and although the timing and the extent of a pick-up in activity remain uncertain, the stage has been set for an improvement in the economic climate," Olson said in his prepared remarks before a business group in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Olson noted that two months have passed since the war with Iraq began and there is not yet a clear understanding of how strongly the economy is emerging from this shock. But recent declines in energy prices coupled with improvement in US stock prices point to a noticeable reduction in economic tensions that built up earlier this year, he said.

Leaving the door open for future interest rate cuts, the Fed governor said the latest reading of the consumer price index, excluding volatile food and energy prices, suggests inflation will remain low and the economy will probably remain soft in the near future.

Olson said that while the US central bank deemed deflation a remote risk, it was significant enough to bear watching.

"We continue to monitor that very carefully because we've seen the way deflation has hampered Japan's recovery," he said, adding that the Fed has been very focused on the issue of falling inflation in recent months.

His words echoed those of Fed Chair Alan Greenspan who on Wednesday told the congressional joint economic committee that a widespread fall in prices was not "an imminent, dangerous threat" and that the central bank could take out "insurance" against it. *Reuters*

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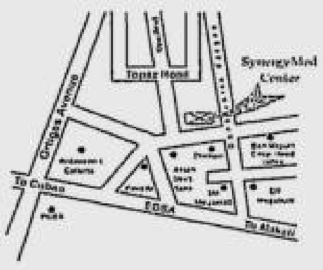

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INDIAN models display new Siemens mobile phones CL 50/8008 Data Sheet during a launch in New Delhi. India is Siemen's second most important market in Asia, after China.

AFP

WorldCom plan OKd

NEW YORK—A federal bankruptcy judge on Thursday paved the way for WorldCom Inc. to send its reorganization plan to creditors, who will vote on the scheme designed to allow the company to emerge from Chapter 11.

Despite objections from some creditors, Judge Arthur Gonzalez, of US Bankruptcy Court in New York, gave WorldCom the go-ahead to send a prospectus to all its creditors of the plan for the reorganized company's new ownership structure and operations.

Worldcom said 90 percent of the members of its creditors committee are in favor of the plan.

WorldCom, which is changing its name back to MCI, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in July, buckling under $41 billion in debt and an accounting scandal that is expected to top $11 billion. *Reuters*

Gov't urged to cancel . . .

From page B1

whether or not this is actually generated.

FDC documents showed that the government was expected to pay CalEnergy $34.8 million a year for water delivery fee and $37.62 million a year for contracted amount of electricity (at $0.16 per kWh).

The Casecnan multipurpose irrigation project was inaugurated in September 2001 and started operating in December of the same year.

The facility diverts excess water from the Casecnan and Taan rivers in Nueva Vizcaya through a 26-kilometer tunnel to a 150-megawatt power plant.

The water then goes to the Pantabangan dam, from where irrigation water is supplied to 135, 000 hectares of rice fields.

The cooperation period under the BOT contract lasts for 20 years after which CE Casecnan would turn over the project to the government at no cost. By then, the project is expected to continue commercial operation for another 30 years.

The Casecnan project is one of the most controversial among 35 IPP contracts that are now being reviewed by a government inter-agency committee.

Stocks end weaker

From page B1

ket. The peso has been depreciating anew, it could be a factor deterring market players at the moment."

The peso hit a one-month low on Thursday but firmed a bit yesterday to reach a high of 52.83 to a dollar against its previous close of 52.97.

Stock market turnover fell to P187.74 million against P358.48 million on Thursday. *Reuters*

BIR uncovers . . .

From page B1

firms fail to comply, the BIR would take the necessary action to prosecute them.

This development puts substance to Rep. Herminio Teves' suspicion that some large industries, such as soft drinks, sugar, telecommunications and shipping, have claimed excessive input VAT credits that put the government's revenue collection at the losing end.

Teves recently asked the BIR to dig deeper into the reported abuse by these industries. In response, the BIR said it was set to build an auditing team that would check on the magnitude of abuses with regard to VAT claims.

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Cash, house and lot, in 'Celle-babad promo ng Touch Mobile'

A CHANCE to win P20,000 daily and a house and lot worth P2 million for the grand draw awaits Touch Mobile subscribers who will join "Celle-babad promo ng Touch Mobile" slated April 21 to June 15 this year.

Subscribers have to register for their calls to earn electronic raffle entries. They are entitled to one electronic raffle entry for every minute usage of voice calls or any of the following voice value added services (Voice VAS): voice messaging, voice info, and the Karaoke service. To register, just text: reg_(your name)_(your address) and send to 2292. Calls to toll-free numbers such as 801, 802, 806 and 808 are qualified for this promo.

Active Touch Mobile subscribers who make voice calls or Voice VAS during the day, with daily cut-off from 12:00 a.m. till 11:59 p.m. are included in the electronic raffle promo for the day.

All chargeable calls made during the promo period qualify for the grand draw set mid-June this year only if the subscriber registers via 2292.

The promo is Touch Mobile's way of expressing gratitude to its loyal subscribers who find its voice-based services appealing and relevant. Touch Mobile is the only cellular operator that offers the unique Karaoke service wherein subscribers can actually sing their favorite song over their phone units, save it in their phones' memory, and even send it to another mobile number. Subscribers also have an option to precede the recorded song with a personal dedication.

Touch Mobile's voice messaging allows subscribers to send sound icons (pre-recorded greetings like I Love You, Happy Birthday, etc.) instantly or schedule delivery seven days ahead to any mobile user. Its info service, on the other hand, provides subscribers all the information they need such as horoscope, games, showbiz news by Boy Abunda, daily gospel by Bishop Bacani, movies, traffic update, weather, ABS-CBN news, sports, business and foreign news, tests on personality and compatibility, and many more.

Powered by Globe Telecom, Touch Mobile provides subscribers with low per minute call rates, low rates of SIM packs at only P170, proven nationwide coverage, good network quality, speed of sending text messages, and clarity of calls.

'UNANG HAKBANG SA KINABUKASAN' AND 'FUN RUN' TANDEM
GMA Network Inc. 'Fun Run' and 'Unang Hakbang sa Kinabukasan' project of Go Tong Foundation, Ever Gotesco Malls, GMA Kapuso and Department of Education were simultaneously launched at Ever Gotesco - Ortigas last April 7. Photo shows (from left) Ms Evelyn Go, EVP for operations of Ever Group; Ms Noemi Sta. Maria, Ever Group marketing communications manager; Mr Felipe Yalung, SVP corporate services group of GMA Network Inc.; Ms Mel Tiangco, director - COO, Kapuso Foundation and Mr Kenrick Lim, AVP for leasing, Ever Gotesco Malls, cutting the ceremonial ribbon to mark the start of the advocacy project.

GARDENIA SUPPORTS MAKATI
Gardenia Bakeries (Philippines) Inc., the makers of world-class bread products, recently signed up The Artistshop Company Inc., the advertising design agency in charge with the advertising and promotions of all the mobile food stalls (popularly known as Jollijeeps) in the Makati CBD. Gardenia products will now be available in the 125 stalls in line with the 'Makati Makatao' drive to provide quality food items to thousands of its employees who patronize Jollijeeps everyday. Shown in photo are: Nestor Constancia, Gardenia sales and marketing manager and Tito Lorete Alcala, Artistshop / TBPI managing director, during the MOA signing.

Lunch box ideas from JMK

ANYONE who faces the task of planning and preparing launches for their spouses and kids to bring to work or school will readily appreciate how demanding this routine can be. One has to ensure not only a balanced selection of food items, but also maintain variety so whoever brings the lunch won't tire of the fare.

To make this important task easier, the Julius Maggi Kitchen welcomes everyone to a highly informative class on May 24, 27 and 29 that will share creative, economical and easy-to-prepare recipes for daily lunch boxes for adults and children.

Chef Thaddeus Gayanelo will show participants that your family's 'baon' does not have to be boring all the time. Whether in the school or in the office, family members can enjoy delicious dishes that would make for a nutritional and satisfying meal. From his extensive knowledge, participants will gain practical tips and great ideas on how to make lunchtime away from home a treat to look forward to.

Every session will not only offer a cooking demonstration, but also a lifestyle lecture packed with useful information. For the month of May, an expert will be on board to talk about enhancing your emotional quotient or EQ. Also referred to as emotional intelligence, EQ is a person's ability to understand and act appropriately on his or her own emotions and those of others. Involving the individual's personal and social skills, emotional quotient is important because it influences a person's level of performance, be it at school, the office or the home.

The May sessions will be held on the above dates from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Julius Maggi Kitchen on the ground floor of the Nestle Center 31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City. For reservations, call 726-9232 or 726-1016.

Invite a friend and bring labels of Nido 1+, 3+, 6+ and Full Cream, Maggi Spaghetti, Maggi Milky Noodle Soup, and Nestle Chocolate Milk Drink for a chance to win special prizes in the Nestle Bring a Friend, Lucky Labels, and Buy and Win promos. Ask for more details when you make your reservations.

SEARCH FOR THE BEST ANNUAL REPORTS AWARDS
Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) president and CEO, Manny Pangilinan (center) is shown with Edward Fereira (left), president of the Management Association of the Philippines and president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc. and Baltazar Endriga, chair of MAP management development committee and chair, Cultural Center of the Philippines, while discussing recently the mechanics and criteria of the first 'MAP's Search for the Best Annual Reports Awards for 2002', whose main objective is to encourage the publication of accurate informative, transparent, well presented and timely annual reports for shareholders, employees and others who may have the interest in the business performance and activities of the various company / organization in question.

K-SWISS
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COLLEG

LEO BURNETT IS GLOBAL BRAND'S AD AGENCY
Global Brands, owner of W. Brown and exclusive distributor of K-Swiss and US College brands, recently appointed Leo Burnett (LB), one of the country's leading advertising agencies, as its ad agency for the three brands mentioned above. Signing the agreement are March Ventosa (second from left), LB managing director; and Rey Silvestre N. Canilao (third from left), Global Brands managing director. With them are Gerry Argosino, LB vice president for strategic planning and Alex Bautista, vice president for marketing, W. Brown.

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and th awa f th

PNB IS ONE OF QC'S TOP REALTY TAXPAYERS FOR 2002
PNB executive vice president Mervyn Encanto (second from left), receives on behalf of the Philippine National Bank the plaque of recognition from Quezon City Mayor Feliciano L. Belmonte citing PNB as one of Quezon City's top realty taxpayers for 2002 in awarding ceremonies that coincided with the 43rd anniversary of the Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCCI) on April 11 at the Sulo Hotel. With them are QCCCI president Nathan C. Zulueta (extreme left) and Quezon City treasurer Victor Endriga.

May festivities at Jardin de Madrid Villas' open house

IT'S THE merry month of May. An elegant entrance gate festooned with colorful flowers greets visitors at Jardin de Madrid Villas at its open house festivities from May 17 to June 8.

Home buyers will be treated to the May Flowers Bloom and Boom event starting at 9 in the morning. There will be games with exciting prizes for winners and souvenirs and snacks for everyone.

Jardin de Madrid Villas is another successful premier residential development by Tri-B Construction and Industrial Products Corp. and co-managed by Prominence Property Development Corp. and Property Company of Friends, or Pro-Friends.

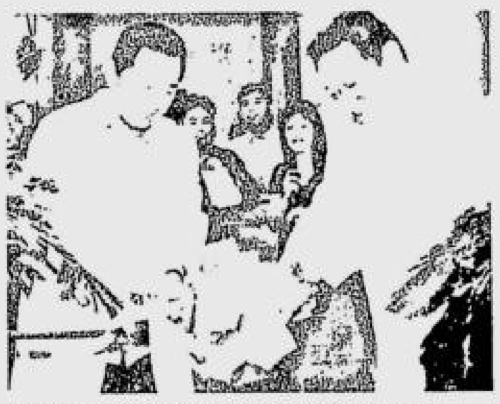
Jardin de Madrid Villas has been such a popular best-seller that only a few villas are still available. A new, decorated 3-storey, 2 bedroom model home with veranda will be unveiled at the open house. Buyers also have a choice of a 2-storey villa that can later expand to accommodate a TV-family room or an extra bedroom for a growing family.

Why can't home buyers resist Jardin de Madrid Villas? For many reasons. The beautiful garden homes have an elegant and romantic Spanish flair. Among Jardin's other charms are verandas that overlook the swimming pool with landscaped waterfalls. An exclusive clubhouse with a mini-bar, a gym, and an air-conditioned function room for intimate gatherings, boasts of a spacious ballroom that can have up to 100 guests dancing the night away.

Location is everything. Jardin de Madrid Villas, a 10,000 square meter development, is nestled in the heart of Habay, Bacoor, Cavite, along Tirona Highway and just walking distance to SM and a multitude of commercial establishments. Easy traveling is available with 24 hour transportation to Metro Manila via the Emilio Aguinaldo Highway or the South Luzon Expressway.

Despite all the upscale amenities and style of Jardin de Madrid Villas, easy payment terms and discounts guarantee a real merry month of May for middle income buyers and their families. Come and be a part of Jardin de Madrid's open house. Call Weng or Cath at (02) 535-5343 or (02) 535-5170.

GUINGONA GRACES EVENT
Vice President Teofisto Guingona lead the opening ceremony of the Propellers Foundation, Maritime Science and Technology Resources (Profound-Master) Inc. held at the Godino Bldg. Ermita Manila recently. Also in photo is chief engineer Bienvenido Lorque.

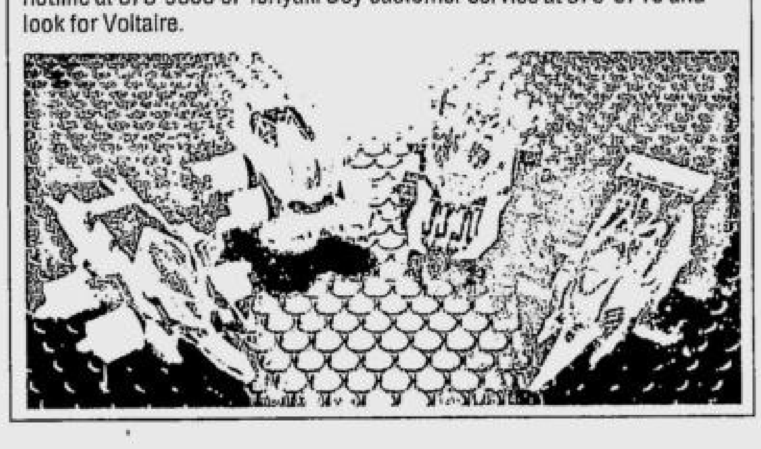


NEW MSD RESOURCE CENTER
Merck Sharp & Dohme Philippines (MSD) recently inaugurated its MSD Resource Center (MRC) at the Philippine Orthopedic Center (POC). The POC-MSD Resource Center is a healthcare resource center, equipped with a communications system and medical literature research facilities inside the premises of the Philippine Orthopedic Center for the use and benefit of the residents, fellows and consultants of the POC, as well as residents and consultants from neighboring hospitals in Quezon City. Cutting the ribbon during the POC-MSD Resource Center inauguration are POC research and training head Camilo Te, MD (left) and MSD Bone and Joint business unit director Beaver Tamesis, MD (right).

ProductFILES

Crush Gear Summer Cup 2003

BANKIE Trading, the exclusive distributor of Crush Gear items by Bandai in cooperation with Teriyaki Boy will launch the biggest and exciting summer tournament today at the Glorietta Activity Center, Makati from 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Crush Gear Summer Cup 2003 concludes the series of Crush Gear tournaments done at various Teriyaki Boy restaurants. The 1st prize is P10,000 plus trophy; P3,000 Teriyaki Boy gift certificates and Crush Gear items. The 2nd prize is P5,000 plus trophy; P2,000 Teriyaki Boy gift certificates and Crush Gear items. The 3rd prize is P3,000 plus trophy; P1,500 Teriyaki Boy gift certificates and Crush Gear items. The 4th prize is P2,000 worth of Crush Gear items plus trophy; P1,000 Teriyaki Boy gift certificates. For more info, call Bankee product hotline at 373-9600 or Teriyaki Boy customer service at 373-5716 and look for Voltaire.



Bits Clips

SMPO and SMMC presents 'Lambingan' in Intramuros

RYAN Cayabyab, Jonathan Velasco and Arnel Felicano will be featured conductors of the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale in "Lambingan" this Saturday at the Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel in Intramuros Manila. The SMPO and SMMC will serenade visitors to the Old Walls with light classics, love songs and popular tunes. Cayabyab leads the trio of conductors with the SMPO and SMMC in "Lambingan." Leading the San Miguel Master Chorale in Jonathan Velasco, the Philippines' youngest internationally recognized authority on choral music today. Joining Cayabyab and Velasco is Arnel Feliciano, faculty member of the UST Conservatory of Music, he is a member of the SMPO percussion section and conducts other orchestras and bands. "Lambingan" is the latest edition of "Music on the Walls", a monthly series of public performances to promote Intramuros as a destination for both local and foreign tourists. Admission is free.

'Dare to Sparkle' tour

REFRESH yourself with bubbly Perrier Natural Mineral Water in bars and restaurants all over Metro Manila as Perrier mounts the "Dare to Sparkle" bar tour. Lovely Perrier pin-up girls donning sexy 1950s-inspired black and green pin-up costumes will be going around the different establishments to serve complementary Perrier drinks and engaging the restaurant and bar habitues in naughty games. So catch the Perrier girls and the Perrier "Dare to Sparkle" tour until tomorrow.

Fotogs reunion

GRADUATES of the series of basic and advanced photography workshops by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation (FPPF) will meet on May 24 and 25 at the Fort Santiago. The 10th year anniversary and grand reunion of FPPF / Fujifilm Basic Photography Workshop is dubbed "Back to Basics". The celebration is open to all. Contact FPPF at tel. 843-5341, 813-7420 / email: ppfpwm@pacific.net.ph / website: www.photoworldmanila.com.

LCF HOLDS SEMINAR
The League of Corporate Foundations recently conducted a training seminar on 'How to Establish / Manage an Effective Corporate Foundation' with the theme: "Doing Good and Doing it Well". It was held at the Bataan Room of the Petron Megaplaza at 358 Sen Gil. Puyat Ave., Makati City. Saturnino Belen Jr. (in photo), chair of Bato Balani Foundation Inc. (BBFI), was the keynote speaker in the whole-day event. Mr Belen encouraged the participants to create corporate social responsibility programs that would help the state of education in the country. The participants were from companies engaged in social development work but whose companies were still considering setting up their corporate foundation.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
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CENTRAL OFFICE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

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INVITATION FOR RE-BID
DISTRIBUTION/FORWARDING SERVICES
IFB NO. 2003-6-18 (13)

The Department of Health hereby re-invites sealed bids from interested Bidders to provide *Distribution/Forwarding Services* to the DOH Central Office and Centers for Health Development (CHD) for the year 2003. The estimated budget for this procurement is ***Fifty Million (PhP50,000,000.00) Philippine Pesos.***

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon submission of License to Operate/Business Permit as a Forwarder and upon payment of ***non-refundable fee of Two Thousand (PhP2,000.00) Philippine Pesos*** only from the Procurement and Logistics Service from ***26 May to 13 June 2003***, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

A ***pre-bidding conference*** will be held on ***4 June 2003*** at ***9:30 a.m., HHRDB Conference Room***, 3rd Floor, Bldg. #12-A, Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Bids must be submitted to the Central Office Bids and Awards Committee (COBAC) at the ***HHRDB Conference Room***, 3rd Floor, Bldg. #12-A, not later than ***9:30 a.m.*** on ***18 June 2003***. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in an amount of ***Five Hundred Thousand (PhP500,000.00) Philippine Pesos***, in the form of certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft/guarantee confirmed by a reputable local bank, irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable commercial bank.

The Department of Health reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds to the Department of Health.

(Sgd.) **ALEXANDER A. PADILLA**
Undersecretary of Health & COBAC Chairperson

(PDI--May 17 & 24, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City,
Metro Manila 1103
Tel. Nos. 372-5057 * 372-5042
Fax Nos. 372-5048 * 372-5061

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY & TO BID/RE-BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Agriculture, invites qualified bidders/suppliers to participate in the bidding of the following items not later than **10:00 a.m.** on **June 9, 2003.**

ITEM/S TO BID:

2	units	Computer
1	unit	Copier Machine
1	unit	Payroll Program Software
1	unit	Finger Scanning Machine
1	unit	Water distiller & Deionizer *
1	unit	Sterilizer (Autoclave) *
	-	Various Fish Feeds Ingredients *
	-	Various Construction Supplies & Materials
	-	Various Aqua Feeds

Bid form together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Interested bidder are required to submit the following requirements upon securing bidding forms: Photo copies of Business License, Certification Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (Original copies to shown for authentication purposes).

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI - May 24 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
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NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

	NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1)	Marlyn Tan	Kalipunan, Zamboanga del Norte	Edgar Adrias SS # 07-1260628-4	October 28, 2001
2)	Erine Agnes	Kamatisan, Antipolo	Ernesto Agnes SS # 03-8368574-4	October 9, 2002
3)	Dominador Alcaraz	Tabaco, Albay	Primitiva Alcaraz SS # 05-0068754-1	July 13, 2001
4)	Amalia Almeda	Unknown	Aquilina/ Juana B. Almeda SS # 06-0622729-0	October 1, 2002
5)	Felisa S. Beató	Brgy. Aplaya, Sta. Rosa Laguna	Rolando Austria SS # 03-2463336-0	January 14, 2003
6)	Beseleza Degos Ariel Bello	Sitio Pulting Bato, N.B.B.S., Navotas Metro Manila	Antonio Bello SS # 33-2890098-6	April 22, 2002
7)	Corazon Castillo Anthony Castillo	Tondo, Manila	Balagtas V. Castillo Sr. SS # 03-8513196-6	August 26, 2002
8)	Leandro Chua Leandro Chua, Jr.	54 Rivera St., San Juan/ Antorcha, Balayan, Batangas	Victoria Chua SS # 03-2677492-6	November 3, 2000
9)	Gleen Grace Almagro	San Jose Ext., Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental	Hilario Cimafranca III SS # 03-4915869-7	November 16, 2002
10)	Zenaida	Unknown	Antonio N. Del Carmen SS # 03-1086001-1	December 4, 2002
11)	Tita Ong Dizon	Unknown	Eduardo Dizon SS # 03-4153709-6	December 14, 2002
12)	Amelia Donor	Caloocan City	Ramon Donor SS # 03-2222265-0	October 15, 1999
13)	Edwin Garcia Shiera Mae Garcia	Parañaque City	Edilberto Garcia SS # 04-0516775-5	January 7,2003
14)	Ernesto Gonzal	Binangonan, Rizal	Emelio L. Gonzal SS # 03-2196416-8	September 29, 2000
15)	Nicanor Gonzales	Unknown	Jun C. Gonzales SS # 33-3038863-5	April 12, 2002
16)	Lucena Ongria Pasinabao	Unknown	Nelson Guinaray SS # 07-0383737-6	March 10, 2003
17)	Monina Hernandez	Unknown	Juanito Hernandez SS # 03-1057005-5	November 5, 2001
18)	Rosita Montalvo Fria	Unknown	Dolores Jurada SS # 07-0492174-4	August 5, 1995
19)	Emmaliza Atencion	Mayao, Parada, Lucena City	Salvador Maravilla SS # 04-0609036-8	August 14, 2002
20)	Alicia Mendoza	Unknown	Ricardo Mendoza SS # 03-9694457-9	July 26, 2002
21)	Allan O. Palileo	#3 C De Jesus, San Juan, Rizal	Alfredo V. Palilio SS # 03-1048178-8	October 9, 2002
22)	Ma. Cecilia Pasaraba Estoesta	Quezon City	Concepcion Y. Pasaraba SS # 03-6044628-1	October 21, 1999
23)	Filomena	Unknown	Francisco Pendon SS # 03-0705281-6	February 26, 2003
24)	Francisco Rizalte	Bagong Bayan, Angono, Rizal	Benilda S. Raymundo SS # 03-4703673-7	September 15, 2001
25)	Cristeta Rizardo	Unknown	Honorato C. Rizardo SS # 03-0291070-4	March 28, 2003
26)	Rowena Toribio Maureen Edralin	Unknown Dasmariñas, Cavite	Victor Santillana SS # 03-9821998-5	February 10, 2000
27)	Rufino & Teodora Tesoro	Dawis, Bais City, Negros Oriental	Rodrigo S. Tesoro SS # 02-0865436-8 02-1714156-1 02-1287650-1	February 11, 2002
28)	Domingo Villanueva	Unknown	Susana M. Villanueva SS # 03-4460050-6	March 30, 2003
29)	Eusebio Vergara	No. 91 4th St. 6th Ave., Caloocan City	Vergilio Vergara SS # 03-3547134-6	February 18, 2003
30)	Maria Yasay Ronaldo Yasay	Unknown	Nicasio C. Yasay SS # 03-0481938-2	December 8, 2002

(PDI - May 24, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF JOGGING SUIT** for the **Philippine Air Force (PAF).**

The approved budget for this contract is **P8,000,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **June 10, 2003, 3:00 P.M., Tuesday**, at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **May 26, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (Php1,000.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above-mentioned address Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **June 26, 2003 at 9:30 A.M., Thursday.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02** or **563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI-May 24 & 31, 2003)

BENGUET CORPORATION
One Corporate Plaza
845 Arnaiz Ave., 1223 Makati City

NOTICE OF POSTPONEMENT

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of Benguet Corporation scheduled on May 27, 2003 is postponed to a later date after June 30, 2003.

May 9, 2003, Makati City, Philippines

By authority of the Board of Directors

(Sgd.) HERMOGENE H. REAL
Corporate Secretary

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May 7, 2003
at Hard Rock Cafe - 7:00 PM

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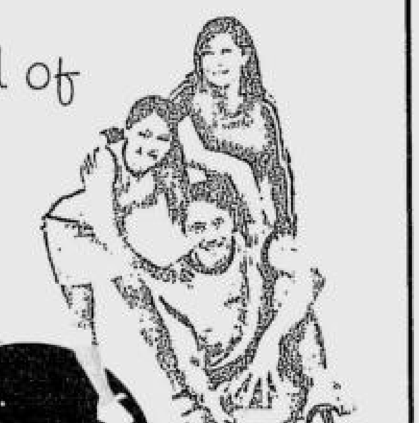

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THERE WILL BE 3 CATEGORIES:

BEGINNERS:
Those who have been doing Aerobic Exercise for less than a year with no winning background in any Aerobic/Fitness Competition.

ADVANCED:
Fitness Enthusiasts who have been doing Aerobic Exercise for more than a year and/ or have a background in winning the Beginners category in previous Aerobic Marathon/ Fitness Competition.

PROFESSIONALS:
Participants who are Group Fitness Instructors, Fitness/Gym Instructors as well as Dance Instructors.

The Beginners Category will be judged for 2 hours and 30 minutes while the Advanced and Professional Categories will be judged for the full 3 hours and 30 minutes.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING:
Endurance –30 %
Form/Execution-20%
Ability to follow/Coordination-20%
Presentation/Projection-15%
Physique/Costume-10%
TOTAL – 100%

There will be 18 major prizes plus special awards will be given away.

WINNERS: Beginners –Male/Female (1st, 2nd, 3rd Place)
Advanced - Male /Female (1st, 2nd, 3rd Place)
Professionals – Male/Female (1st, 2nd, 3rd Place)

Trophies, Gift packs, and Cash await the winners.

Top 10 Mixed Finishers from Advanced and Professional Categories will be awarded with Certificates and Gift packs.

Registration starts at noon.
Registration fee – P300 per participant
Competition starts exactly at 2pm.
For more information contact Babylyn at 6337871/6383369

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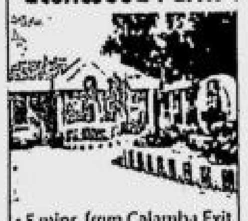

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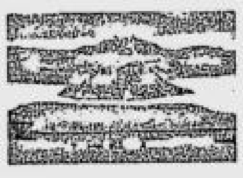

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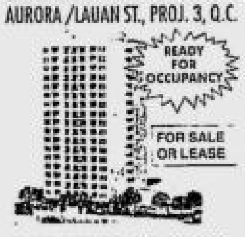

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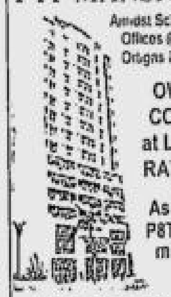

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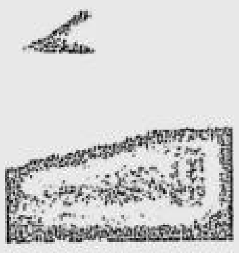

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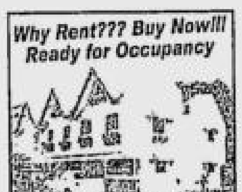

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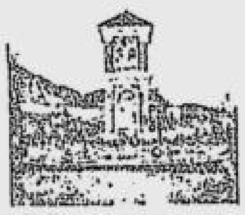

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RIZAL

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SAN JUAN

GREENHILLS 1077m² 7242629

OTHER AREAS

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Maguyam Road, Carmona, Cavite
Phase 1 Fully Developed
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FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

1.3HA RICEFIELD CANAMAN CAM.SUR 4754977 PERLA

Lipa 10.9 Has. 100/sqm Nr. Malarayat Golf 531-2021

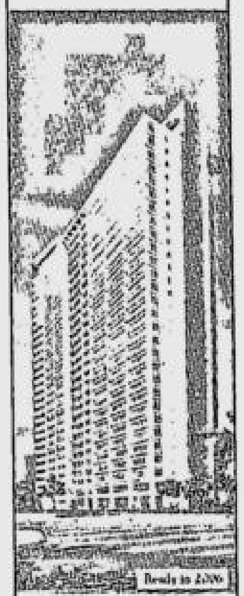
Rush Sale Farmlot 13 Has. 10.00/m² Neg. Burgos Quezon Prov. 0919-2856954

ZAMBALES Mango Farm 2,7,9,10,30,68ha 09192221766

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

FAIRWAYS TOWER
along McKinley Road



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COMMERCIAL SPACE
250M² Along Mkt Ave. curr'lly occupied by a major bank as br. 7296205/09174241170-Vilma

HOUSE

MAKATI

MAKATI VILLAGES 4-6BRS P50T-180T/MO 6337601-03

SANLO DUPLEX 5258048/49

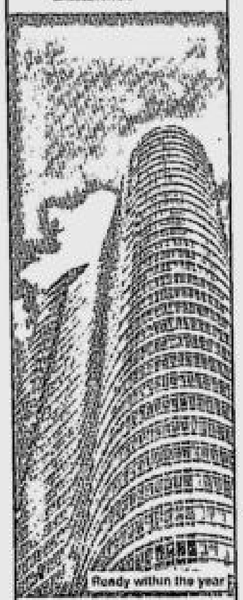
QUEZON CITY

277m² 1master BR 2Rm G/F w/ CR, Basement 2Rm 2/F 2QBR, 2 Cars Garage - 10 Edward Pleasant View Subd, Banlat T. Sora, QC. T-9279189

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

ONE McKINLEY Place



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CONDO/TWNHSE

OTHER AREAS

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HOUSE

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PROJ.4 3BR2TB 9419118

BAGUIO

2BR P1,500/DAY FF 9316443

CONDO/TWNHSE

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NEW COM'L • OFFICE #162 P. Jacinto cor. Biglang Awa Caloocan 323-0175

MAKATI

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Legaspi Vill w/mez furn 40m² P20T Call 9522109

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CONDO/TWNHSE

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MANDALUYONG

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PASIG

ORTIGAS 1st class finish 2BR FF 130m² 45T 4578041

QUEZON CITY

2BR 2TB Phone Covd Park near Gotesco Mall Diliman QC 9322518

APARTMENT

MANILA

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2BgRM U/D P9.5T CL T5634405

2BR Apart@7,500/mo. Vangie 0920-5112950 Ofc 7145342 Res 4356293

MANDALUYONG

864 Samat St., Mand. City Tel. # 5337709 to 12

MUNTINLUPA

B38 L25 SOLDIERS HILLS MUN. CITY 5T 809-8079

PARANAQUE

2br. Apt Mnwlk Pque. T#5241365 /5275941/(0917)5345470

Conc. Up & Dwn wH2O garage T8264410 P15T, 6.5T & 4.5T

PASAY

2BR #406 DReyes Zamora nr Liberlad P7,800 nice 8321379

2BR Cuenca 8315026/5500254

QUEZON CITY

1BR Katpnan 6815834/7275728

2BR NR FARMERS 9T 7247335

2BR Sct. Chuatoco, Roxas Dist. 931-7801 • 410-2488

#5 D.Tuazon cor Ilustre P7T 9207101•0919-3652573

Cubao Lady P3.5 9124428

Nr SM CITY P4500 9271821

SAN JUAN

91A.Luna 2BR Spacious 9T/mo. good loc'n 6461603

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2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

CITYLAND 30m² P8T 9522109

IBM PLAZA EASTWOOD LIBIS QC 0917-8133010

OFFICE FOR RENT
ANTEL 2000 UNIT 905
FLOOR AREA 91 SQM
5TEL LINES SEMI-FURNISHED

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CONDO/TWHSE/ FOR SALE/RENT

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MITSUBISHI

00MX 1st Owner Matic US edition 8330796 09175309804

LANCER GLXI 1998 P315T LOW MILEAGE METALLIC GOLD TAUPE WITH TAN LEATHER SEATS 8141452 CEL 09177943120

VAN/PICK-UP

Hyundai GRACE H-100 '98 Model P280T 0916-5352867

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Land Cruiser Surf Trooper Safari MU Delica Hi-town Ace Elf Canter etc T-In9126976/09178342020

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1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5 % EasyCarLoan 4000166 -67

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CAR LOAN

1HR FastCarLoan 7125202

2% w/o Taking Car 7221021

2% w/o Taking Car 6567685

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8966633/30

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

2% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

AUDIO/ VIDEO

SPYCAM Bnew 0918-4400897

BILLIARDS

22T New Complt SR Impld 7767507

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MAIDS DIRECT HIRE 8705554

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YAYA MAIDS 631-6423

MALE/FEMALE

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w/exp at Boon Prints Co.
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09175171036/ 09177542231

MGMT. STAFF 0920-8062187

Mktg Staff 2568505 Gabby

Mktg Staff 2568505 Gabby

OFC STAFF 09183558648 CHARI

Vacant-FAYHS, DCS-QC (1)Teacher I LET/PRC Lic Item No. OSEC-DECSB 48895 SG-10 (2) Head Teacher III SG-15 Item Nos. OSEC-DECSB 30181 & 30182

WORKSHOP/SESSION
DERMA COSMETOLOGY
MAY 31 SAT. 1-5PM
AROMATHERAPY & SPA
JUNE 1 SUN. 1-5PM
8956031 L2011/0971832

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PASTOR A. KIMPO Jr. Has been extrajucially settled among his heirs on 03 April 2002 before Notary Public Al-Flo C. Nilooban of Las Pinas City as per Doc No. 141, Page No. 029, Book No. 2, Series of 2002.
(PDI May 24, 31 & June 7, 2003)

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Chem./Mech. Eng'g Grad.
Basic + Commission
Please send resumé & photo to:
101 CCH BLDG
136 Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Memorial Lots of Herminia Baja-Panlilio at the (Sucat) Mla. Memorial Park Cem. EFGH of Blk 389 of Emerald Acres, under Conract #1208, had been transferred by her legal heirs to Angelita P. Bantigue. Said Deed of Transfer & Affidavit of Adjudication has been JUDICIALLY SETTLED on May 15, 2003 under Doc# 443, Book 90, Page 9, Series 2003, before Notary Public Generoso O. Legazpi, Jr. of Makati City.
(PDI-May 17, 24 & 31 2003)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost Stock Certificates
in the name of:
Jesus R. Gonzaga, Jr.
1.FMF DEVELOPMENT CORP.
No. 11469-216 shares
2.BASIC CONSOLIDATED
No. 134493-645 shares
No.168056-602 shares

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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DINING SET (4) P2800
WALKMAN w/SPKR P350
SUNGLASSES P20
CPTR TABLES P1400-2500
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VICTORIAS
MILLING COMPANY, INC.

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

Victorias Milling Company, Inc., Victorias City, Negros Occidental, wishes to invite interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the ***One-Year Supply of Various Bearings***. Acceptable brands for corresponding applications are **SKF, TIMKEN, FAG, BOWER, TORRINGTON, NTN, NSK, AND COOPER (SPLIT BEARINGS).**

The pre-qualification forms are available at the MCD Office, VMC Millsite and at the VMC Makati Procurement Office during office hours from **May 26-30, 2003**, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00. Deadline for submission of pre-qualification papers is on **June 4, 2003**. The pre-bid conference will be held on **June 16, 2003, 2:30 P.M. at the HRD Conference Room, VMC Millsite**. The bidding date will be announced thereafter. Sealed bids shall be accompanied by a bidder's bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the bid price in the form of Cashier's/Manager's check.

Description of Bearings and their estimated annual consumption will form part of the Bidding Kit.

For further inquiries, please contact Messrs. **Henry M. Salazar** or **Jose Ma. Moncada** at VMC Millsite at telephone numbers **(034)399-3667** to **68**, and **(local) 2435**, and **Mr. Ping A. Abad** at VMC Makati Procurement Office at telephone numbers, **(02)890-5256** and **(02)890-7062**.

Victorias Milling Company, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the company. The Company assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense or loss that they may incur in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) CAROLINA S. DIAZ
Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

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Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF AIR FORCE BATTLE DRESS ATTIRE, CAMOUFLAGE BLUE SUIT WITH BERET** for the Philippine Air Force (PAF).

The approved budget for this contract is **P17,000,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **May 29, 2003 9:30 A.M., Thursday**, at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **May 19, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be **on June 17, 2003 at 9:30 A.M., Tuesday.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02 or 563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – May 17 & 24, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CENTRAL OFFICE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

22 May 2003

EMERGENCY PURCHASE

(Canvass No. 5-28-03 (12) – Request for Quotation)

In view of the threat of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and in accordance with Executive Order No. 201, Section 53 (b) of Republic Act No. 9184 and Section 439 of the General Auditing and Accounting Manual (GAAM), the Department of Health is urgently in need of the following medical equipment, supplies, drugs and medicines:

12 units	MEDICAL EQUIPMENT: 1 Infrared Thermal Imaging System with temperature measurement capability
12 units	2. Television 21" power source 220 VAC, 60 hz, with video in terminal
	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:
500,000 pieces	1. Mask (N95 or P2 or P3) with secure facial seal
2,000 pieces	2. Mask (N100) with secure facial seal
143,640 pairs	3. Gloves Latex slightly powdered
2,000 pieces	4. Safety Goggles
143,640 pieces	5. Gown disposable, longsleeves, long legged, round neck, wrap around with garterized wrist band
143,640 pieces	6. Bouffant Caps disposable
143,640 pairs	7. Shoe Cover/Boots white non-skid grid non-conducive
	ESSENTIAL DRUGS:
20,000 sachet	1. Acetycystein Oral 200 mg/sachet (boxes)
20,000 vials	2. Azithromycin Injection 500 mg (500 vials)
20,000 tablets	3. Azithromycin Oral 500 mg/tab
20,000 vials	4. Cefdipime Injection 1 gram as HCL (200 vials)
20,000 vials	5. Cefotaxime 1 gram IV
20,000 vials	6. Ceftazidime 2 gram IV
20,000 vials	7. Ceftriaxone 1 gram IV
20,000 vials	8. Imipenem
20,000 vials	9. Levofloxacin IV 500 mg (vials)
20,000 vials	10. Meronem 500 mg (vials)
20,000 vials	11. Methyl Prednisolone Acetate Inj. (20 vials)
13,440 bottles	13. IV Fluids

Interested suppliers are enjoined to submit their best price for the above requirements Quotation forms, containing the detailed specifications, and other information may be secured on May 26-27, 2003 from the Procurement Division, Procurement and Logistics Service (PLS), 2/F Bldg. No. 26, Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila, tel. no (632) 743-83-01 local 3626 and 3627.

Price Quotations must include both unit and total prices, typewritten in both words and figures and placed in a sealed envelope together with the following documents:

1. Certified True Copy of DTI SEC Registration
2. Certified True Copy of Mayor's Permit
3. Sworn Statement of capability to deliver the goods within the indicated period
4. Certificate of Product Registration (CPR) for drugs and medicines

Price Quotations, containing the detailed specifications, with each page duly signed by the authorized company representative and the above-listed documents must be submitted not later than 10 AM May 28, 2003 at the Procurement Division. Opening of sealed envelopes shall commence at 10 AM on May 28, 2003 at the BHDT Conference Room, 2nd Flr., Building No. 24 Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila

Upon receipt of the DOH Purchase Order, the company is required to deliver the goods at the DOH warehouse within a month.

Any purchase arising from this request will be subject to the usual government accounting and auditing rules and regulations. It should be noted that receipt of a particular quotation does not in any way obligate the DOH to award all or any part of the items quoted therein.

The Department of Health reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation and to annul the process and reject all quotations at any time prior to award, without incurring any liability to the affected supplier(s) or any obligation to inform the same on the grounds of such action.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health:

(Sgd.) **Alexander A. Padilla**
Undersecretary of Health
COBAC Chairperson

(PDI–May 23 & 24, 2003)

Department of Labor and Employment

SM SUPERMALLS

President Gloria
Macapagal-Arroyo's

SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

at the

KABUHAYAN 2003 Action Center

SM Megamall Bldg. A
Mandaluyong City

April 10-June 10, 2003
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☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY,
MAY 24, 2003

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EDWARD MILLER MATTI

1928-2003

His bereaved wife, **Esperanza Araneta**; children **Leonard** and **Ma. Luisa Lacson**, **Nicholas** and **Gloria Vergel de Dios**, **John** and **Agnes Lacson**, **Paul** and **Leni Anglo**, and **Stephen**; grandchildren; his sister **Mary** and **Pablo Berba**; brothers and sisters-in-law; nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the St. Alphonsus Liguori Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

His remains will be transferred to the Alisbo Memorial Chapel, Mandalagan, Bacolod City on Sunday, May 25, 2003.

Interment will be on Wednesday, May 28 at the Sacred Heart Memorial Park, Sum-ag, Bacolod City after the 2:00 p.m. mass at the Virgin Sang Barangay Chapel, Sta. Clara Subdivision, Bacolod City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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SIR KNIGHT BENJAMIN B. ESGUERRA, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 23, 2003 at the age of 72.

His loving wife **FELICIDAD**; children **RAY & MARNIE, ROY & MARIS, JOJO & MARLENE, PAM & BIEN**; grandchildren **JELINE, BENJO, DANIEL, RAY JR., TOBY, INGRID, NICOLE, BETTINA** and **MATTHEW**; sisters and brothers and other relatives request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Floresco Funeral Homes, A. Mabini St., Caloocan City.

Schedule of cremation to be announced later.

CONSTANCIA P. PUNO

1914 - 2003
Died: May 22, 2003 at the age of 88.

Survived by her daughter and son-in-law **Baby Teresa** and **Alan**; sister **Dolores**; sister-in-law **Priscila**; nieces and nephews **Marilu** and **Gilbert**, **Joy**, **Gaye** and **Jon-Jon** and **Mhy**; grandchildren **Jessica**, **Jaypee**, **Francis**, **Ginny**, **Geri** and **Micah**.

Her remains lie in state at St. Peter Memorial Chapels, Inc., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 25, 2003, 2:00 p.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, Metro Manila.

Lubos na pasasalamat

Sa lahat ng nagpugay at nakiisa sa
naging buhay at mga prinsipyong
gumabay sa kanya, kabilang na ang
mga kaibigan, kasamahan sa
trabaho't kaanib sa organisasyon,
mga kapitbahay,

ay taos-pusong nagpapasalamat
ang mga mahal sa buhay ni

ARMANDO J. MALAY

na pumanaw noong Mayo 15, 2003.

Nawa'y mapagyaman natin
ang ipinamana niyang pagmamahal sa
bayan at halimbawa
ng personal na integridad.

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LILIA V. AQUINO

of Viga, Catanduanes

peacefully joined our risen Lord on May 21, 2003 at the age of 69.

She will be lovingly remembered by her husband **Manuel**, children, grandchildren, relatives and friends. May we request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapel, Edsa Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will follow on Tuesday, May 27, 2003 after the Mass at Chapel A, Loyola Memorial Chapel.

GERTRUDES LAFORTEZA GAGNI vda. De FERROLO B. GAGNI

Joined her Creator on 20 May 2003 at the age of 82.

Her bereaved children HELEN, LITO, JULIE, TONY (+), JIMMY, CONY, GWEN, ALLAN and NONONG; sons-in-law, daughters-in-law and grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sto. Domingo Church Mortuary Chapel, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

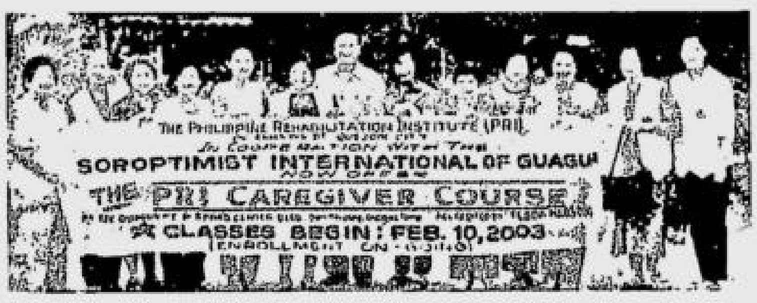
Interment will be on Sunday, 25 May 2003 at the La Loma Cemetery, C-3, Caloocan City, after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Sto. Domingo Church side chapel.

ERRATUM

In the obituary of Cmdr. Rolando Navarette Kagaoan, Sr., published in this paper May 23, 2003, the 2nd line should read as Philippine Navy: U.S. Kingspoint Merchant Marine Academy (1950). Also, the name of his grandchild Anna was omitted.

CLASSIFIEDS

MS. LUZ T. JINGCO (seated from left) International Goodwill and Understanding Chairperson; Soroptimist International of Guagua possed with the Club Members of S.I. North and West Vancouver during their regular meeting last November 2002 held at Esplanade St. North Vancouver. She is coordinating with them regarding possible employment abroad of their trained CAREGIVERS. She was accorded with a very warm welcome by The Club Members. (Standing left to right) Sonia Kottmeier, Jean Violette, Juanita Manlutac, Karin Bews, Veronica Loat, Gail Gatehouse, S.I. Club Hostess, Karen Lee, Fatima Da Ponte, Bonnie McLaren, Shurli Caldwell and Lois Taylor (seated) Luz, Marion Pearce, Margot Campbell, Liz Watt, Ruth Ditto. Standing directly behind the seated women is Suzette Tan.


THE PHILIPPINE REHABILITATION INSTITUTE (PRI)
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF GUAGU
THE PRI CAREGIVER COURSE
CLASSES BEGIN: FEB. 10, 2003

TRAINING FOR CAREGIVERS. The Soroptimist International of Guagua with Dr. Ricardo Lim, president of the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation Inc. (PRIFI) is now offering the PRIFI Caregiver Course which started on February 10, 2003 at Guagua PRI Rehab. Center Bldg., San Nicolas, Guagua, Pampanga. Deserving students are provided free tuition and possible employment abroad to be sponsored by the S.I. Guagua (From left) Luz Un Ocampo – Charter president & past director, Nena Gueco, Imelda Torres, Carmelita Yap, Teresa Sunglao, Luz Tingin Jingco – chairperson Int'l. Goodwill & Understanding, Dr. Ricardo Lim, S.I. president Susan Diyco, Beth Santos, Nancy Dizon, Dr. Aleni Araullo, Mading Carlos and Alma Twaño.

11th Xavier Alumni Golf Cup

THE 11th Xavier Alumni Golf Cup will be played on May 30, 2003, with a 7:30 AM shotgun start at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf and Country Club. The tournament, presented annually by the Alumni Association of Xavier School will be co-presented this year by Pacsports Phils., exclusive distributor of Nike Golf and by Xavier Batch '78, the Silver Jubilarians for 2003.

The Major Sponsors for this tournament are LG Electronics, Lucerne, Clark Hatch/Palm Garden (Greenhills), Duncan Footwear and Domestic Trading Corp. Minor Sponsors include CATS Motors Inc., Custom Clubmakers, Equitable Visa Card, Davies Paints, DHL Worldwide Express, Directories Phils., Hooven Phils., Inc., ING Bank, IO KTV, Pioneer Life Inc., Premier Wine and Spirits, Seabass Carriers Inc., Stanwood Ind. Corp., Sun Cellular, Columbia Food Traders, Kodak Phils., Standard Chartered Bank and Ibank. Special thanks also to alternative Beverage Co. (Gatorade).

The Hole in One prizes will be provided by Ford Quezon Avenue, Lucerne and Nike Golf.

For registration and other particulars, please call the Xavier Alumni Office at tel nos. 727-3329 amd 726-4855. Please look for Imee or Sally.

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**
Assistant Editor **Stella O. Gonzales**

SURVIVING THE KILLER DISEASE

Patients reveal ordeal with SARS

SINGAPORE—Many of them thought they were going to die.

Dozens of Singaporean SARS survivors gathered last Wednesday to tell the public how they defeated their infections and to show that they are healthy again—not contagious.

Three staff members from Tan Tock Seng Hospital—Singapore's SARS treatment center—were choked with emotion as they recounted to journalists their near-death brush with the pneumonia-like disease.

Ashirdahwani Asmawi, a 24-year-old nurse, was among about 50 recoverees who attended the event.

"I became breathless," she said. "I saw my hands, my nailbeds and my toes turning blue (from lack of oxygen). I was panting always and felt as though I (were) drowning in the water. It was really frightening."

Asmawi caught Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome while treating two of Singapore's first SARS patients in early March before authorities realized they were dealing with a highly contagious disease.

"I felt as though I was dying... It's really frightening," said Asmawi, who spent about one month in the hospital, battling chills, fever and bone-splitting body aches.

"I felt as though I was drowning in the water. I need oxygen and I realized how precious oxygen was," she said.

A health worker is reflected on a glass window as Taiwanese patients wait for a medical check outside the emergency ward at Taipei's Mackay Memorial Hospital. Healthcare workers are at higher risk of getting infected with SARS because they are often in close contact with patients and perform high-risk procedures.

REUTERS

Fighting loneliness

She also had to fight the loneliness and depression of being in isolation.

"I had only four walls and a television set as a companion... My spirits were lifted when I received phone calls from my family members and friends. The phone was the only means of communication with the outside world," Asmawi said.

She added that the experience made her a better person and a more compassionate nurse.

"That was the most comforting feeling I had when I was hospitalized," she said of a hug she received from another nurse while she was ill. "Now I have a better understanding about the importance of touch to patients."

Dr. Ong Pei Yuin, 26, was convinced she had been misdiagnosed for SARS when she was forced into an isolation room after developing a fever on March 19. She was bored and frustrated in the hospital—until her fever spiked so high she had to be sponged down with ice water, she said.

"It was then I realized that something was not quite right," she said. "My eyes almost popped out when I saw my own chest X-ray."

The X-ray showed her lungs were mottled with the illness.

"I wanted to be in the thick of action but I didn't expect it would be as a patient and not as a doctor," Ong said, adding that she still does not know exactly how she contracted the illness.

Another recoveree, 31-year-old cardiologist Dr. Lim Ing Haan, was overcome with emotion as she recounted her experience, pausing several times as she spoke.

"It was a bit strange because before this, I actually thought I was young, I was healthy and I was actually invincible," Lim said.

"So it was a bit frightening to be admitted and to become a patient where previously I was working as a doctor. Suddenly I was no longer in control and I had to take orders from other people," she said.

Lim had an easier two-week bout with SARS. For the most part, her symptoms were mild and she never needed supplementary oxygen, she said.

But her post-recovery period was a challenge, she said.

Living with stigma

"There is this heightened social distancing and it has affected me a lot," said Lim. "After I was discharged, for a long period of time I refused to go out and do the usual things (I did)."

Health workers, especially nurses, had to battle the social stigma associated with the virus as they were shunned in public particularly during the height of the SARS outbreak in April. Many reported being told by neighbors not to take lifts while taxis refused to pick up nurses who were easily recognized in their white uniforms.

Since then, the government had embarked on a major offensive to address the public paranoia that one could catch SARS by being in contact with medical staff.

Health workers have been hailed as frontline heroes in the war on SARS.

"We must demystify the disease because knowledge is our best weapon going forward," said Health Minister Lim Hng Kiang, who spoke during the ceremony.

AP, AFP

Mail call

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

HERE are three messages that have touched me in various ways.

The first comes from Rochell Dumlao [shounen.ai@lycos.com] whose query perked my interest:

> **It took a bit of courage to write you, and I hope you won't mind if I asked you a rather strange question. I try to read your column often, and I find your (mathematical) advice both sound and practical. Thus, I came to the conclusion that you would be the best person to ask this.**
>
> **I heard from a professor that a Filipino mathematician deduced the x-value for quadratic equations, and that the article/material was published only in 1991. It really took me by surprise, because I thought that it had been done years before, and by Western mathematicians. I scoured the Web for more information, but have turned up nothing. I know you're a busy person, and I dont want to bother you, but if it's not too much to ask, can you direct me to sources or references on this topic?**

This is news to me, too. The solutions to quadratic equations have been known for centuries, both in the East and West. Perhaps your professor was referring to topics which touched on quadratics. Can you ask him what exactly he is referring to?

College course

The second e-mail comes from Jing Guia [www.guialaw.itgo.com] who is concerned about her niece's future:

> **I am an avid reader of INQUIRER and your column. I am not very good in math and science, that is why I try to absorb anything about these subjects and to learn new things through your column.**
>
> **My niece will be a college freshman this school year. She has not decided what course to take. But I always insist that she choose a course relating to science and math.**
>
> **I realize that our society still has a high regard for "traditional" and allegedly "prestigious" courses leading to titles like attorney, doctor, engineer, dentist, CPA and the like. I am a lawyer myself, but I want my niece to take the course that will in the future give her challenge, fun and a stable job. She likes math, science and the arts. Her high school grades are good (no grade below 80). She wants to study in Manila but she does not know where to enroll. She has a limited budget, too. That means her family income could not allow her to study in Ateneo, La Salle and the like.**
>
> **We need your advice on what course she can take, which will be in demand in four or five years, and which will allow her to be self-employed. Personally, I would have wanted her to be a marine biologist, but this is another matter.**

Most important guideline

I am happy you realize the importance of science and math, but remember that the most important guideline concerning which course to take would be to ask: What does your niece want to take up? What course does she like?

Your niece sounds flexible (she likes both art and science), and this is an advantage. Which courses will be in demand in a few years? I am not a fortuneteller, and things do change rapidly these days, but if she is really interested in something scientific and practical, she may want to go for computer analysis, programming, etc. Good skills and knowledge in these areas can even make her "self-employed," as you say.

Our society still views medicine or the law as prestigious, and rightly so. But the disadvantage here is that your niece would need lengthy training, and if she is worried about finances, then these may not be the best fields. (Keep in mind though that she can always look for scholarships. If her grades are high enough, then she can even get into Ateneo or La Salle. Do you know that a quarter of Ateneo's freshman class today is on full or partial scholarships?)

As for marine biology, if she is interested in it, why not? Just make sure not to force her into doing what you want, instead of following her heart's desire. Good luck.

Math Olympiad

The third e-mail comes from Albert Catelijn [albert-lynne_castelijn@ntm.org].

> **I am a missionary working with the Banwaon tribe here in Mindanao. During a visit to Manila, your article "Ateneo Math Olympiad: Grades 5 and 6" caught my eye. It was the first of three parts. It had three problems—the telephone number, pins and Prisms. I really enjoyed trying to work them out, but unfortunately I wasn't in Manila long enough to buy the newspaper issue with the second and third parts. Is there any way you could forward me a copy of those articles by e-mail?**
>
> **I'm stumped by the telephone number problem—it doesn't look like it can be worked out unless we are told what the four digits add up to, and that wasn't in the article. Were the solutions published in the second and third parts? I don't suppose those problems came out of a book, and if so, could you let me know the title—maybe I can order it through National Bookstore?**

Finding the solution

These Eureka columns also appear online in the Inquirer-GMA 7 website, www.inq7.net. You can look for parts 2 and 3 online instead. As for the solutions, I deliberately did not include them because I wanted readers to solve them themselves.

I assure you that the answer to the telephone number problem can be gotten; make sure you think through all the implications of the given facts. Then trial and error (or using tables) may be a good strategy.

These particular problems came from several sources and were chosen by Dr. Marasigan of the Ateneo Math Department. Most of them cannot be solved without further training in math (but the phone number problem is simple enough). You can ask National Bookstore what puzzle books they have in stock and order accordingly. Moreover, I regularly publish math problems for readers (in June and December). Watch out for these puzzles online. Thank you for working with our countrymen and women in Mindanao. God bless.

(Contact the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.)

Time to get involved

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

I FIRST heard about the Doomsday Clock when I read Sir Martin Rees' new book (published earlier this year) called "The Final Hour." Created as the logo for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (www.thebulletin.org) in 1947, the clock's hands mark how great the threat of worldwide nuclear danger is at any given time.

The clock's time has only changed 17 times in the last 56 years—going as close to two minutes to midnight in 1953 when the US and Russia tested atomic bombs within months of each other, to 17 minutes to midnight in 1991 when the same two nations signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

Since late February, the clock has been set at seven minutes to midnight. The journal's editors cited several reasons for the decision to move the minute hand forward by two minutes, among them North Korea's bid for attention from the West and the fact that Russia and the US still have large stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

The Doomsday Clock made me keep reading Rees' book, although that isn't its central theme; rather, it's the idea that the world has a 50-percent chance of not making it past the year 2100. I should mention right now that this is not a depressing book full of fire, flood and famine, but rather one that invites the reader to think and, hopefully, decide to learn more after reading it.

As a noted cosmologist (one who studies the origin and structure of the universe) and the United Kingdom's Royal Astronomer, Rees is in the unique position of keeping abreast of scientific discoveries on Earth and in outer space, and being able to establish the relationships between scientific progress and our planet's place in the universe.

More at risk now

"The theme of this book," he says at the end of his work, "is that humanity is more at risk now than at any earlier phase in its history."

He is right in a sense. Today we have to worry not just about nuclear war, but also about what might happen if terrorists use biochemical weapons of mass destruction. (We'll ignore the threat of a giant asteroid hitting Earth for now.)

We have made so much scientific and technological progress in the past century, if not the last decade alone, that the limits we had imposed on ourselves—the so-called "yuck" factor for example, where a hypothesis or expected result is so disgusting researchers decided not to pursue it—might no longer apply.

Take, for example, last year's discovery that a team of US researchers led by Dr. Eckard Wimmer at the University of New York at Stony Brook had created an entirely new strain of the polio virus essentially by following a "recipe" available in the Internet using gene sequences available in scientific catalogues.

A few years ago I found a website featuring high school chemistry students' science projects, and a couple of them had recipes for making sarin nerve gas and ecstasy.

Stories like these have led to debates on whether the Internet is helping people around the world communicate with each other or is providing too much information to the wrong people.

Access to information

Rees suggests that perhaps it's not about how much information is available, but rather how many people have access to it. The task of gathering and distributing scientific information is a burden that should not be imposed on world leaders and prominent scientists alone, but rather on every one of us as well.

"Choices," Rees says, "on how science is applied—to medicine, the environment, and so forth—should be debated far beyond the scientific community. This is one reason it is important that a wide public should have a basic feel for science... The views of scientists should not have special weight in deciding questions that involve ethics or risks: indeed, such judgments are best left to broader and more dispassionate groups."

If it's true that humanity will seal its fate within the next 97 years, we should be able to explain how and why it happened, rather than blaming it all on someone pushing a red button somewhere.

Vitamin A in peanut butter

In the meantime, before the world ends, a quick footnote to last week's column.

According to Dr. Resurreccion, two tablespoons of the peanut butter fortified with Vitamin A contain 1/3 of the US RDA.

Dr. Resurreccion also says that these and other technologies will eventually be spread not only throughout the Philippines but to the rest of Southeast Asia as well to decrease Vitamin A deficiencies in children and provide an economic boost to the region as a whole.

Someday all peanut products, from spreads to candy and even peanuts cooked in garlic oil, may be enriched with Vitamin A as well.

(The author may be reached at massie@massie.com.)

Beating the No. 1 killer in RP

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOO HOO
NO 1
Steph@.

TOP Filipino cardiologists gathered around one table in the evening of May 20 to talk about a "mass murderer" they couldn't seem to outwit.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) has consistently been the country's No. 1 killer disease for more than a decade. And for a developing country like the Philippines, whose health workers' hands are already full battling age-old infectious diseases like tuberculosis, harboring a disease associated with an affluent, sedentary lifestyle is like a cruel joke.

But no one was laughing at the dinner table. The doctors, belonging to the Philippine Heart Association, have been witnessing how Filipinos were falling victims to the ruthless CVD.

PHA vice president Dr. Romeo J. Santos said majority of Filipinos apparently still did not know the implications of having cardiovascular risk factors.

For instance, Santos said, many still smoke, not knowing its effects on one's health, until they get sick. The tough task, he says, is to convince smokers about their risk factors for stroke or heart attack.

5-year info campaign

There is then a need for a concerted education and awareness campaign on CVD prevention.

Dr. Edgardo Ortiz, PHA past president, says the organization was able to gather 22 groups to commit to an information campaign that for five years will urge people to exercise, eat healthy, monitor their weight, stop smoking, have a regular medical checkup and avoid stress.

Dr. Annette Pizarro-Borromeo, PHA president, and her colleagues have gone a step further and pushed for CV research. The PHA wants to establish a national heart failure registry program which could pinpoint the causes of Filipino CV deaths and help analyze which provinces need additional health assistance. The registry would also identify how people and doctors manage CVD.

The registry will focus on congestive heart failure, which is a complication of hypertension and heart attacks.

Other PHA projects are the revival of the *Presyon* program, the National Health Survey in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Research Institute and the *Bangungot* Study. Heart specialists suspect the *bangungot* to be a cardiovascular event rather than an episode of pancreatitis.

The PHA has established specific cardiovascular registries and has released a policy statement on dyslipidemia.

All of these projects are aimed at getting Filipinos to wake up and do something before they drop dead from CVD.

More effective strategies vs atherosclerosis

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

IN THIS DAY and age, dragons still exist, and can just be as fearsome, devouring millions of victims.

I remember Health Secretary Manolet Dayrit once comparing atherosclerosis to a multiheaded dragon which is simply too formidable for a sole gallant knight to slay. The multiple heads are the various risk factors, particularly high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, smoking and obesity. The atherosclerotic dragon can only be defeated by cutting all its ugly heads, before it devours countless unsuspecting victims.

"The sad fact is that many victims of cardiovascular diseases may remain without symptoms for many years before they succumb to complications such as heart attacks and strokes. When that happens, it might already be too late," says Dr. Annette Borromeo, president of the 50-year-old Philippine Heart Association (PHA).

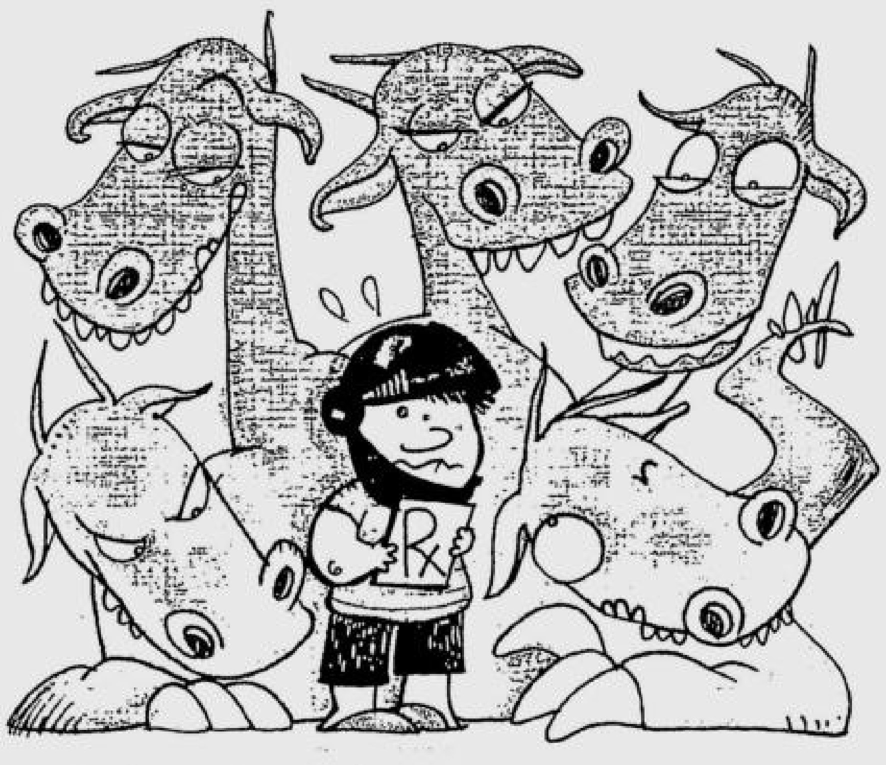
The fact that atherosclerotic cardiovascular diseases have gone up the list in the last two decades to become the leading causes of deaths in the Philippines and the world suggests there was something wrong in the general strategy used by doctors and healthcare givers in addressing the problem.

Piecemeal approach

There was a time when patients were treated on a piecemeal basis, depending on their risk factors. High blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes and obesity were managed separately.

But doctors soon realized that treating one risk factor but not the others, or treating several but leaving one major risk factor uncontrolled, might not significantly improve the patient's cardiovascular outlook in terms of reducing heart attack, stroke and peripheral arterial disease.

Doctors are now advised to make a comprehensive assessment of the patient to identify those who are at high risk. This is called a global risk assessment, and it guides the physician on what medicines to prescribe.



A patient, for example, may just have a high-normal BP (or prehypertensive BP based on the new guidelines) like 130/88, but he should already be started on treatment if he has diabetes or if protein (albumin) is detected in the urine. This patient is already labeled high-risk compared to another patient who may have a higher BP of 150/95 but with no other risk factors. This other patient is still considered low-risk.

Treatment focus

Health experts agree that treatment should focus on improving the health and function of the blood vessels, no matter what the primary problem is. Patients may be surprised why they're prescribed an antihypertensive agent when their BP is normal, or a cholesterol-lowering drug when their blood cholesterol is still within normal limits.

These drugs have beneficial effects on the blood vessels, retarding atherosclerosis and preventing that dreaded event when the atherosclerotic plaque would rupture and trigger the formation of blood clots within the blood vessel leading to a serious heart attack or stroke.

High-risk individuals particularly diabetics may benefit from antihypertensive or cholesterol-lowering drugs although their BPs and blood cholesterol levels are still be within the normal range. These drugs are given not for their primary effect, i.e., lowering of the blood pressure or cholesterol, but for their protective effect on the blood vessels.

Changing medical practice

These shifting paradigms in medicine are the results of continuing research, which may make medical practice 10 years ago already archaic and irrelevant. Keeping healthcare professionals updated on recent scientific developments and stimulating discussion on how to apply them to the local population are the primary objectives of the annual joint convention of the PHA.

Atherosclerotic cardiovascular diseases require a concerted multispecialty approach to lick the problem, hopefully for good. It is important for specialists from various fields of specialization to convene regularly and compare data and insights on how best to cut the many heads of the atherosclerotic dragon.

Various strategies and interventions will be discussed during the PHA convention on May 28-31 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

Concerted battle vs heart diseases

By Rebecca Lorenzo-Castillo, MD
Contributor

IF NOTHING is done, we have to brace ourselves for a cardiovascular epidemic in the next two decades. Even teenagers will probably be having heart attacks and strokes. Children will be taking pills to control their high blood pressure.

Hypertension, cholesterol problems, diabetes and other risk factors still continue to be inadequately controlled, even in the United States and Europe. The statistics are more staggering, and somewhat depressing, in developing countries like the Philippines where health priorities may not be properly reflected by the health budget allocated by the government.

Thus, the private sector has to heed the call of the government to do its reasonable share in addressing major health concerns. The unabated increase in the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases is one problem which requires prompt and urgent attention.

During the past 50 years, the Philippine Heart Association (PHA), the organization of heart specialists all over the country, has been doing its part in a low-key manner to promote a healthy lifestyle among Filipinos.

Evil conspiracy

The PHA is currently headed by Dr. Annette Borromeo, the PHA's fourth female president. She explains that all the cardiovascular risk factors converge into one final common pathway. They all "conspire" to develop atherosclerosis which is the progressive narrowing of the arteries throughout the body.

As if planned by an ingenious evil schemer who will make the war plans of the most brilliant military strategist look like kid's play, atherosclerosis slowly but effectively cuts the food supply to all the vital "installations" and "capitals" in the body, such as the heart, brain and kidneys.

Eventually, all these vital "installations" give up and atherosclerosis, the conqueror, sows terror in the body in the form of heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure and a long list of complications. The individual finally succumbs to death, and atherosclerosis once again reigns supreme and scouts around for the next population of victims to be conquered.

Health experts can no longer take this atherosclerotic insult sitting down. The PHA, together with the Philippine Society of Hypertension, the Philippine Lipid Society, the Department of Health (DOH) and several other government and nongovernment organizations, have forged an alliance to educate the public on ways to prevent cardiovascular diseases and their dreaded complications.

The PHA and DOH recently launched the "Healthy Lifestyle" campaign which aims to inculcate "clean living" in terms of proper diet, exercise, avoidance of smoking and excessive drinking, and effective stress management.

These therapeutic lifestyle changes, or TLC, will be emphasized during the PHA's convention on May 28-31 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

"We are confident that all physicians and other healthcare professionals will benefit from the convention with new knowledge and insights into prevention and control of cardiovascular diseases. Hopefully, they will also have a firmer commitment in achieving this goal," says Dr. Borromeo.

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Baby's red gums

MY 6-month-old baby has red swollen gums and she has been cranky lately. What should I do?

Helen U.

Your baby's gums are swollen most likely because her baby front teeth are about to come out. Sometimes you might see the tip of the tooth coming through. If not, you can press the swollen area and easily see the shape of the tooth.

For the baby's crankiness, a cold teething ring will be comforting and distracting for her while she is in this teething stage. Cold comforting foods will help your daughter get some relief from her irritated gums.

(E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

"I thought I'll never celebrate another birthday after my heart attack. With my anti-cholesterol statin*, I'm looking forward to more candles to blow."

-Zenaida Fortes
Senior Accountant
Heart-attack victim

☑ Check with your doctor the new affordable statin*...

Now for Life!

Recent landmark trials have shown the beneficial effects of the cholesterol-lowering drug known as **statins.**[1]
Statins help prolong lives, lower heart-related deaths, prevent heart attacks and strokes...
only IF they are taken for at least 3 years, religiously.[2]
COST of statins though is a big barrier to compliance.

REFERENCES:
[1] Kjekshus et al. Reducing the risk of Coronary Events: Evidence from the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) Am J Cardiol 1995; 76:64C-68C.
[2] Heart Protection Study Collaborative Group MRC/BHF Heart Protection Study of cholesterol lowering with simvastatin in 20,536 high-risk individuals: a randomized placebo controlled trial. The Lancet 2002 July; 360 (9236): 7-22.

A public health service announcement from the cardiovascular division of United Laboratories, Inc.

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* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

PHILIPPINE HEART ASSOCIATION

"The PHA at 51: Promoting a Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation."

EDSA Shangri-la Hotel • May 28 - 31, 2003

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Office of the President of the Philippines

Malacañang, Palace
Manila

My warmest felicitations to the **Philippine Heart Association, Inc.** on your **34th Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting.**

Your theme, ***"The PHA at 51: Promoting a Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation,"*** underscores your dedication and dynamism in promoting the health and welfare of our people. We need to strengthen our partnership in making all Filipinos live healthy, productive and fulfilling lives. I encourage you to strive for a greater professionalism in this age of boundless opportunities in healthcare.

Quality and affordable healthcare is a vital aspect of the progress of our nation and of our efforts to win the war on poverty. I urge you to strongly support our government's health programs that promote the total health of our people, especially the poor and underprivileged. May you always pursue your chosen profession with a greater sense of service and concern for your fellowmen.

Let us intensify our work in promoting quality and affordable healthcare as a key step towards a strong Philippine Republic.

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Department of Health

Manila

I convey my warmest greetings to the officers and members of the **Philippine Heart Association, Inc. (PHA)** on the holding of their **34th Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting.**

Healthy lifestyle contributes to the development of mental and physical faculties of the body. Your theme, ***"The PHA at 51: Promoting a Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation,"*** is very relevant and in tune with the government's thrust of ensuring the health and well-being of Filipinos nationwide. Your vision to secure the welfare of our countrymen by promoting healthy lifestyle practices is very commendable.

I urge all the participants to continue to partner with us in achieving greater heights in the pursuit of excellence in healthcare, especially that which is directed towards improving the quality of life of our Filipino brothers and sisters.

The Department of Health recognizes your efforts and extends its full support in your persistent effort of uplifting your profession to a higher level. As you plan for the future, the DOH is confident that your society will provide essential opportunities and benefits to your members and further improve your services to cater the growing needs of time.

On that note, I wish everyone a fruitful convention and bid you every possible success in all of your endeavors.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D. MSc.
Secretary of Health

Welcome to the Philippine Heart Association (PHA) 34th Annual Scientific Convention, May 28-31 at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel.

Our working theme: **"The PHA at 51: Promoting a Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation"**, is tailored with the present administration's collaborative thrust with the Department of Health's (DOH) nationwide healthy lifestyle campaign.

The convention period will be another season to brainstorm, forge new friendships and rekindle ties. In a nutshell, through all these activities, we see the PHA Mission and Vision.

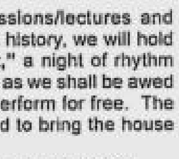
The nucleus of the program are the balanced scientific activities that will challenge and update your professional skills.

After a long day – attending a string of scientific sessions/lectures and exhibits — you deserve a break. For the first time in the PHA history, we will hold a fund-raising concert aptly titled: **"Straight from the Heart,"** a night of rhythm and blues provided by a range of brilliant stars. This is exciting as we shall be awed by the Filipino artists' versatility and generosity in offering to perform for free. The surprise numbers from our very-own PHA talents are expected to bring the house down.

I congratulate the Convention Organizing Committee for a splendid job!

See you around in the PHA 34th Annual Convention on our 51st anniversary.

ANNETTE B. PIZARRO-BORROMEO, M.D.
President
Philippine Heart Association



Today's advances in medicine and technology allow us to manage more complicated ailments. Be that as it may, the old adage: *"An Ounce of Prevention is Better than a Pound of Cure,"* is still the best option or a potent alternative. Take into account the physical and psychological burden on the patient, his loved ones and the society, not to mention the high cost of the application of medical progress.

The PHA, at 51, joins the Department of Health and other cause-oriented organizations in its all-encompassing massive promotion of hearty lifestyles to ensure the good health of our nation. Our 34th Annual Convention, dedicated to this challenging, yet achievable endeavor, has for its theme: ***"The PHA at 51: Promoting a Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation."***

Many of the topics lined up by the Scientific Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Mariano B. Lopez, deal on the prevention and early detection of cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and their complications. A comprehensive presentation of the burden of CVD in our country, new concepts on pathogenesis and development of CVDs, emerging risk factors, recent developments in diagnosis and treatment, including gene therapy, as well as the cost effectiveness of primary and secondary prevention measures, await the almost 1,000-strong member of the PHA and other health practitioners during the four-day convention.

The ***"Straight from the Heart"*** PHA concert and each of the other forms of entertainment, promise to captivate the audience and invigorate weary minds. Top-billed by seasoned performers, the concert was conceptualized by PHA VP for External Affairs Ramy S. Diez and PHA immediate past president Edgardo E. Ortiz. The rest of the after-six activities, featuring the PHA's homegrown talents were prepared by Dr. Efren R. Vicaldo, chairman of the Socials Committee.

I am confident that the 34th Annual Convention will be another professionally rewarding event.

NORBERT LINGLING D. UY, M.D.
Secretary & Over Chairman
PHA 34 th Annual Convention

THE MARIANO M. ALIMURUNG LECTURER

Rody G. Sy, M.D.

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May 28, 2003
Opening and Convocation Ceremonies 3-5 pm Isla Ballroom

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Day 1, Thursday • May 29, 2003

TIME	VENUE	SESSIONS
7:30 – 9:00 am	Garden Ballroom	**BREAKFAST SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM** Aventis: *Diabetes & Cardiovascular Disease* *Speaker: Dante D. Morales, MD*
7:30 – 9:00 am	Isla 2	**MEET THE EXPERTS** Focus On Clinical Practice **The Patient with Difficult to Treat Hypertension** *Chair: Ma. Rosario C. Sevilla, MD* *Co-chair: Gregorio G. Rogelio, MD* 1-A Elderly Patient with Severe Hypertension (Isolated Systolic and Diastolic Hypertension) *Speaker: Nelson S. Abelardo, MD* 1-B Recognition Management of Secondary Hypertension *Speaker: Josefina L. Atabug, MD*
	Isla 2	**PLENARY LECTURES 1-4** *Chair: Eugene B. Reyes, MD* *Co-chair: Arthur R. Pilargue, MD*
9:00 – 9:30 am		Homobono B. Calleja Professorial Lecture 2-A Coconut Oil: Atherogenic or Not *Speaker: Conrado S. Dayrit, MD*
9:30 – 10:00 am		2-B Diabetes in Cardiovascular Disease *Speaker: Beaver R. Tamesis, MD*
10:00 – 10:30 am		2-C Peroxisome Proliferation-activated Receptor Agonists and the Arterial Wall *Speaker: Mary Ann Lim-Abrahan, MD*
10:30 – 10:45 am		2-D PHA Website Updates *Speaker: Pedro P. San Diego Jr. MD*
10:45 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 2	**PURKINJE: ONLINE COMPUTER LECTURE** Risky Online Behavior *Speaker: Mr. Alexander K. Ramos*
10:45 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 1	**MODERATED POSTER SESSION - A** *Moderator: [illegible] L. Villanueva, MD*
10:45 – 11:00 am		**VISIT EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK**
11:00 – 12:00 nn	Garden Ballroom	**ORAL FREE PAPER PRESENTATIONS** *Chair: Donato R. Marañon, MD* *Co-chair: Ma. Adelaida I. Dy, MD*
	Isla 2	*Chair: Leandro C. Bongosia, MD* *Co-chair: Eleanor A. Lopez, MD*
	Isla 3	*Chair: Eugenio Jose F. Ramos, MD* *Co-chair: Isabelo V. Ongtengco, Jr., MD*
12:00 – 2:00 pm		**LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIA**
	Mactan Isla 2 Isla 3	MSD: *Improving Outcomes in High Risk Patients* Pfizer: *JNC VII and Implications of Late-Breaking Trials* Astra Zeneca: *Changing Paradigms in Cardiovascular Disease Prevention*
	Garden Ballroom	Lab Fournier: *New Frontiers in Hypertension: Lercanidipine & Cardiac Protection*
12:00 noon	Mindoro	RF-RHD Foundation Annual Membership Meeting
	Garden Ballroom	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA I-A** *Chair: Eden D. Latosa, MD* *Co-chair: [illegible] P. Palmes, MD*
2:00 – 2:30 pm		4-A Benefits of Fetal Echo in High Risk Pregnancies *Speaker: Edgardo E. Ortiz, MD*
2:30 – 3:00 pm		4-B Emergencies in Adult Congenital Heart Disease and Pregnancy Syncope, Acute Chest Pain, Cerebrovascular Accidents and Sudden Death *Speaker: Gregorio B. Palacol Jr. MD*
	Isla 3	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA I-B** *Chair: Ma. Teresa B. Abola, MD* *Co-chair: [illegible] Villanueva, MD*
2:00 – 2:30 pm		4-C The Challenge of New Blood Pressure Targets in Hypertension Management *Speaker: J. Antonio L. Bautista, MD*
2:30 – 3:00 pm		4-D Medical Treatment of Peripheral Arterial Disease Beyond Aspirin: Role of Statins, ACE-inhibitors, Calcium Channel Blockers, Growth Factors and other Antiplatelet Agents *Speaker: Maribeth T. de los Santos, MD*
	Mactan 1 & 2	**PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA I-C** *Chair: [illegible]* **Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS)**
2:00 – 2:30 pm		4-E Anatomic and Hemodynamic Considerations in Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome Determinants of Survival and Outcome *Speaker: Ma. Rhodora G. De Leon, MD*
2:30 – 3:00 pm		4-F Principles and Techniques in the Surgical Management *Speaker: Jaime S. Nuevo, MD*
3:00 – 3:30 pm		**VISIT EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK**
	Garden Ballroom	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA II-A** *Chair: [illegible]* *Co-chair: Angelo B. Ante, MD*
3:30 – 4:00 PM		5-A Heart Failure with Preserved Systolic Function: Definition, Etiology and Treatment *Speaker: Romeo A. Divinagracia, MD*
4:00 – 4:30 PM		5-B New Treatment Modalities for Heart Failure *Speaker: Ranulfo B. Javelosa, Jr., MD*
	Isla 2	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA II-B** *Chair: [illegible]* *Co-chair: Juliana G. Tamayo, MD*
3:30 – 4:00 PM		5-C Cardiovascular Screening in Sports: Who, What and When? *Speaker: Grace Casuncing-Verzosa, MD*
4:00 – 4:30 PM		5-D Benefits of Cardiac Rehabilitation in Patients with Cardiovascular Disease *Speaker: Marisa P. Jison, MD*
	Mactan	**PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA II-C** *Chair: [illegible]* **Hypoplastic Right Heart Syndrome (HRHS)**
3:30 – 3:50 PM		5-E Morphologic and Physiologic Variants of Hypoplastic Right Heart Syndrome, Diagnostic Aids in the Management *Speaker: Concepcion Uy-Santos, MD*
3:50 – 4:10 PM	Mactan	5-F Transcatheter Ablation of Pulmonary Valve *Speaker: Mazeni Alwi, MD*
4:10 – 4:30 PM		5-G Long-Term Outcome of Children with Complex Heart Disease (HLHS, HSHS): Is it worth the effort? *Speaker: Emerenciana C. Collado, MD*
4:30 pm	Mindoro	Philippine Society of Pediatric Cardiology Annual Membership Meeting
5:00 – 7:00 pm		**DINNER SATELLITE SYMPOSIA**
	Garden Ballroom	Boie Takeda: *Management of Hypertension with the Elderly: Findings from the SCOPE Trial*
6:00 – 7:00 pm	Isla 2	Sanofi-Synthelabo: *Microalbuminuria: An early sign of Hypertensive vascular injury*
	Isla 3	Merck: *Hypertension in Type II Diabetes Mellitus: New Insights*
8:00 pm	Isla Ballroom	"Straight from the Heart" Concert *Chair: Mr. Ramy S. Diez* *VP for External Affairs* • A project of the PHA External Affairs Committee

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Day 3, Saturday • May 31, 2003

TIME	VENUE	SESSIONS
5:30 - 6:30 pm	Isla 3	PHA THANKSGIVING MASS *CELEBRANT: Fr. Jerry Orbos, SVD*
6:30 pm	Isla 2	CLOSING CEREMONIES CHAPTER'S PRESENTATION

COLLEGE AWARDEES

PHA Golden Heart Award
Antonio S. Sibulo, Jr., MD

Special Presidential Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cardiology
Ramon F. Abarquez, Jr., MD

Distinguished Fellow
Clemente C. Gatmaitan, Jr., MD

Distinguished Teacher
Esperanza I. Cabral, MD

Distinguished Teacher
Romeo D. Saavedra, MD

Distinguished Service
Isabelo V. Ongtengco, Jr., MD

Loyalty Award
Dante D. Morales, MD

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Day 2, Friday • May 30, 2003

TIME	VENUE	SESSIONS
7:30 – 9:00 am	Isla 3	**BREAKFAST SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM** Aventis: *Low Molecular Weight Heparin: Then and Now* *Speaker: Eduardo S. Caguioa, MD*
7:30 – 9:00 am	Isla 1	**MEET THE EXPERTS** Focus On Clinical Practice **The Patient with Syncope** *Chair: Adoracion N. Abad, MD* *Co-chair: Ma. Delia T. Zanoria, MD* 6-A Unexplained Syncope and Normal Heart *Speaker: Anthony B. King, MD* 6-B Unexplained Syncope and Structural Heart Disease *Speaker: Marvic V. Vestal, MD*
	Isla 2	**PLENARY LECTURES 5 - 7** *Chair: Romeo D. Saavedra, MD* *Co-chair: Benny G. Barbas, MD*
9:00 – 9:30 am		[illegible] C. Soto Professorial Lecture 7-A Interventional Cardiac Catheterization on Patients with Congenital Heart Disease *Speaker: Mazeni Alwi, MD - Malaysia*
9:30 – 10:00 am		7-B Understanding Sleep Apnea in Heart Failure *Speaker: Raul Amor, MD*
10:00 – 10:30 am		7-C The PHA National Heart Failure Registry Program *Speakers: Annette B. Pizarro-Borromeo* *Ma. Consorcia Lim-Quizon, MD*
10:30 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 2	**PURKINJE: ONLINE COMPUTER LECTURE** "How to Protect Yourself Against Intrusion" *Speaker: Mr. Alexander K. Ramos*
10:30 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 1	**MODERATED POSTER SESSION-B** *Moderator: Frederick P. [illegible], MD*
10:30 – 11:00 am		**VISIT EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK**
11:00 – 12:00 nn	Isla 2	**SIMULTANEOUS SESSION** The Francisco F. [illegible] Young Investigator's Award *Chair: Manuel B. Zacarias, MD* *Co-Chair: Emelyn A. Rivera, MD*
12:00 – 2:00 pm		**SIMULTANEOUS LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIA**
	Isla 1 Isla 2	Glaxo Smithkline: *Taking to the Heart of Type II Diabetes Mellitus* Sanofi-Synthelabo: *Dual Antiplatelet Therapy as Cornerstone of Management*
12:00 – 2:00 pm	Isla 3	Therapharma: *FAQ in Dyslipidemia Diagnosis & Management. An Interactive Discussion*
	Garden Ballroom	Lab Fournier: *Is lowering LDL-C sufficient to prevent coronary artery disease?*
2:00 – 4:00 pm	Isla 1	**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICERS**
	Isla 2	**PLENARY LECTURES 8 - 9** *Chair: [illegible] Aquino, MD* *Co-Chair: Aquilino Rico, MD*
4:00 - 4:30 pm		10-A Renal and Pulmonary Complications during CABG *Speaker: Ruth Divinagracia, MD*
4:30 - 5:00 pm		10-B Gene Therapy in Cardiovascular Disease: Now and a Glimpse of the Future *Speaker: Ronald [illegible], MD*
5:00 – 7:00 pm		**SATELLITE DINNER SYMPOSIUM**
	Isla 1	Solvay Pharma: *[illegible] One Unique Substance*
	Isla 2 Isla 3	Johnson & Johnson: *Late Breaking Results of Cypher-Eluting Stent* Sanofi-Synthelabo: *How to optimize care in Acute Coronary Syndrome*
7:00 pm	Mactan 1 & 2	**THE PRESIDENTS' NIGHT COCKTAILS & DINNER**
7:00 pm		FELLOWSHIP NIGHT ❖ Philippine Heart Center-Medical Alumni Society (PHC-MAS) ❖ St. Luke's Heart Institute Alumni ❖ UP-PGH Cardiovascular Section Alumni

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Day 3, Saturday • May 31, 2003

TIME	VENUE	SESSIONS
7:30 – 9:00 am	Isla 1	**MEET THE EXPERTS** Focus On Clinical Practice **The Patient with Acute Chest Pain** *Chair: [illegible] E. Yamamoto, MD* *Co-chair: Wilson Tan de Guzman, MD* 11-A Differential Diagnosis (Cardiac or Non-cardiac) *Speaker: Benjamin G. Luna, Jr., MD* 11-B Continuing Chest Pain: Early Angiography, PTCA vs. CABG *Speaker: Timothy C. Dy, MD*
	Isla 2	**PLENARY SESSIONS 10 - 12** *Chair: [illegible] T. Chua, MD* *Co-chair: Felix Eduardo R. Punzalan, Jr., MD*
9:00 – 9:30 am		12-A Prognostic Factors for Cardiovascular Disease in the Healthy Population: Local and Global Perspective *Speaker: Adolfo B. Bellosillo, MD*
9:30 – 10:00 am		12-B Which is the Better Approach for Chronic Atrial Fibrillation: Heart Rate Control or Cardioversion? *Speaker: Edgardo C. Timbol, MD*
10:00 – 10:30 am		12-C Management Strategies for Acute Coronary Syndrome *Speaker: Ariel A. Miranda, MD*
10:30 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 2	**PURKINJE: ONLINE COMPUTER LECTURE** Risky Online Behavior *Speaker: Mr. Alexander K. Ramos*
10:30 – 12:00 nn	Mactan 1	**MODERATED POSTER SESSION - C** *Moderator: [illegible]*
10:00 – 12:00 nn	Isla 1	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA III - A** *Chair: [illegible]* *Co-chair: Gilbert C. Vilela, MD*
11:00 – 11:30 am		13-A New Atherogenic: New Targets *Speaker: Rody G. Sy, MD*
11:30 – 12:00 nn		13-B The PHA Stand Updated on Chelation Therapy *Speaker: Santos Jose G. Abad, MD*
11:30 – 12:00 nn	Isla 3	**SIMULTANEOUS SYMPOSIA III - B** *Chair: Jorge A. [illegible], MD* *Co-chair: Sharon Marissa A. Lacson, MD*
11:00 - 11:30 am		13-C Identifying and Managing High Risk Hypertensive Patients *Speaker: Antonio S. Sibulo, Jr., MD*
11:30 - 12:00 nn		13-D Smoking Cessation Strategies in Clinical Practice *Speaker: Ma. Encarnita B. Limpin, MD*
12:00 - 2:00 pm	Isla 1	**LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM** Corbridge: *Emerging Role of Sulodexide (glycosaminoglycans) in the Management of Vascular Diseases with Risk of Thrombosis*
	Isla 2	**PLENARY LECTURES 13 - 14** *Chair: [illegible]* *Co-chair: Manuel Ignatius E. Edmilao, MD*
2:00 - 2:30 pm		14-A New and Emerging Risk Factors: The Need to Modify or Intervene *Speaker: Esperanza I. Cabral, MD*
2:30 - 3:00 pm		14-B Prevention and Treatment of Atherosclerosis: Current Status and Future Prospects *Speaker: Dante D. Morales, MD*
3:00 - 4:00 pm	Mactan 2	**PURKINJE: ONLINE COMPUTER LECTURE** "How to Protect Yourself Against Intrusion" *Speaker: Mr. Alexander K. Ramos*
3:00 - 4:00 pm	Mactan 1	**MODERATED POSTER SESSION - D** *Moderator: [illegible]*
3:00 - 4:00 pm		COFFEE BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITS
	Isla 2	**PLENARY LECTURES 15 - 16** *Chair: [illegible]* *Co-chair: Rogelio B. Yabes, MD*
4:00 - 4:30 pm		15-A Electrocardiography: the 20th Century Diagnostic Finger of Cardiology *Speaker: Homobono B. Calleja, MD*
4:30 - 5:00 pm		15-B Which Approach to Valvular Heart Disease: Percutaneous, Repair or Replace *Speaker: Florencio G. Castillo, Jr., MD*

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BSP downplays impact of $8B in maturing loans until March '04

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE government is facing more than $8 billion in maturing foreign debts until March next year but the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas shrugged off concerns that these would drain its gross international reserves.

Based on BSP documents, maturing foreign currency obligations of the government and the BSP itself would hit $8.04 billion over the next 12 months to March 2004, accounting for more than half of the $14-$15 billion GIR level expected by the year's end.

As of end-April, the GIR level stood at $16.2 billion.

But BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura allayed fears from some currency traders that this could threaten the GIR, noting that the government still had sufficient room to refinance maturing obligations this year and next.

He said that the BSP, for its part, would only need to cover $200 million in remaining maturities after recently closing a $600-million term loan facility.

"We can borrow it ($200 million) now if we want to," he said.

The national government, on the other hand, is projected to borrow another $1 billion for the remainder of the year, Buenaventura said.

If the maturities were summed up with those for next year, Buenaventura said it would appear to be large as a percentage of the GIR.

"But it's not a concern because we can borrow again for the maturities scheduled next year," he said.

He noted that Philippine sovereign debt papers were currently trading at reasonable levels, with the ROP 2013 now even enjoying a tighter spread of 105 basis points over US treasuries compared to the issuance at 110 spread.

"That is the best indication that there's sufficient demand for Philippine debt papers," the BSP chief said.

Buenaventura noted that this meant that investors were confident that the Philippines would not have any problem meeting its maturing obligations.

"We've said that 2003 and 2004 are the highest peak when maturities would bunch up because of the events in 1993 and 1994 and again in 1997 and 1998," he said.

He noted that during the Ramos administration in 1993-94, economic growth was surging and the government had to avail itself of more foreign debts to fund fast-growing infrastructure requirements. At that time, a lot of 10-year sovereign bonds were issued.

In 1997 to 1998, the government again had to scramble for foreign financing to support its foreign reserves in the wake of the Asian currency turmoil, he noted.

Of the total maturing debts until March next year, $6.14 billion represented principal payments while the rest would be for interest.

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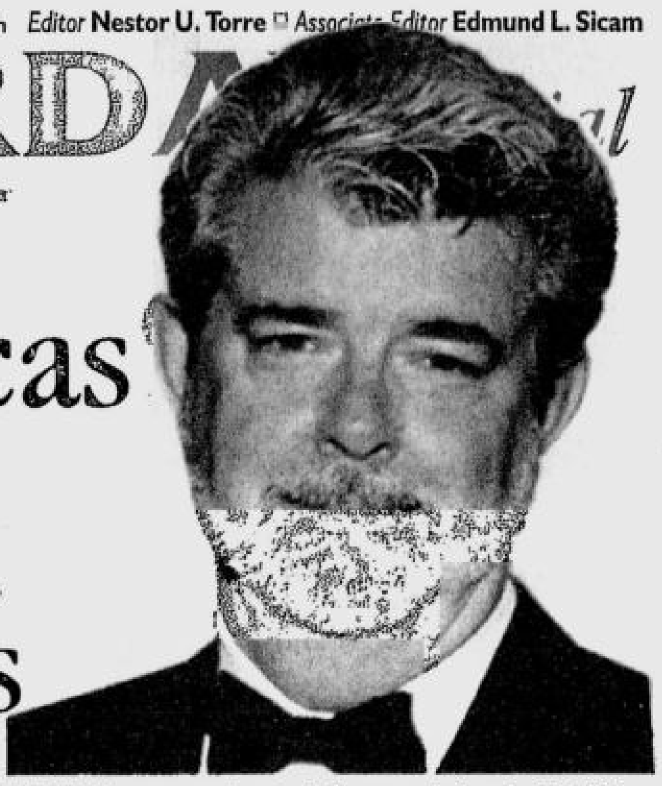
E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph Editor Nestor U. Torre ▫ Associate Editor Edmund L. Sicam

SATURD ial

Book on George Lucas could inspire writers and filmmakers



LUCAS. He was so exhausted after completing the first "Star Wars" film that he vowed never to direct a film again!

By Ronald G. Mangubat

GEORGE Walton Lucas Jr. was a D student who was considered by his teachers as unsuited for academic life. He hated writing but got interested in photography. He went to film school at the University of Southern California and started to make short films.

Reclusive artist

Twenty-four years later, film mavens declared him to be the most successful filmmaker in motion picture history. What is it about this diabetic, reclusive and intense artist that made him one of the most wealthy and privileged director/producers in Hollywood?

In the book "George Lucas: The Making of His Movies" (published in 1998 by Orion Media), writer Chris Salewicz answers the question as he offers us glimpses into the life of this self-made, complex man. In nine revealing chapters, Salewicz engages his readers with a pastiche of factual anecdotes that start from Lucas' awkward relationship with his father when he was a child, and ends up with his divorce from his wife Marcia when he finished producing the epic "Star wars" trilogy.

Although his academic records were not impressive, his school superiors claimed that Lucas could flourish in an artistic environment. And he did it with flying colors.

Uphill climb

But just like any other film novice, Lucas' entry in the movie world was also an uphill climb. As a matter of fact, his first full-length film, "American Graffiti" which first premiered in 1973, was rejected by producers and was even considered unreleasable.

According to Salewicz, Lucas' successful entry into the film business could partly be attributed to his friendship with director Francis Ford Coppola, the first film student who entered Hollywood via the direct line—out of film school and into the industry.

It was Coppola who insisted that if Lucas wants to direct films, he had to learn how to write. And since they were very young at that time, it was also Coppola who encouraged him to grow a beard so that Hollywood oldtimers could respect him. That beard, writes Salewicz, "inspired a questionable facial fashion among young filmmakers."

From the chapter on "American Graffiti," the book takes the readers to its most interesting part, on the making of "Star Wars." Considered by critics as the most exciting space adventure film of all time, it took Lucas a year to write the first draft of his screenplay. He hated writing and every sentence had to be pulled out of him.

"Three hours of writing and five hours of thinking" was how he described his work method. He wrote the entire screenplay in pencil and experienced stomach and chest pains throughout the writing process. He researched deeply on mythology, and read the works of Carl Jung and books on the concept of archetypes.

But even then, Salewicz says, Lucas made sure he understood his audience. "Weekends, he would go out and buy up all the science fiction magazines and comics to understand the minds of 10-year-old boys."

Vision

His vision for the film was very clear: "All I wanted to say in a simple and straightforward way is that there is a God and there is a good and bad side." Combining mythology, space adventure, samurai and robots, Lucas's simple message became an engrossing tale of the fight between good and evil and an energy field that binds the galaxy together.

As Salewicz describes it, "The idea that the Force may be with us is, after all, the most profound legacy of the 'Star Wars' trilogy of films." This "Force" made a considerable difference in the quality of thinking in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Aside from a perfect vision and focus, Lucas collaborated with the best technical people to create one of the most dazzling and impressive science-fiction films of all time. His expertise in film technology and his persnickety attitude rubbed off on the sound engineers, film editors, musical scorers and special effects wizards who worked closely with him in the postproduction phase of "Star Wars."

From then on, any Lucas film was reputed to be an intriguing blend of aesthetic impact and business success. He was likewise quoted as saying, "Special effects are just a tool . . . without a story, it's a pretty boring thing."

He was so drained and exhausted that, after the film was finished, he vowed never to

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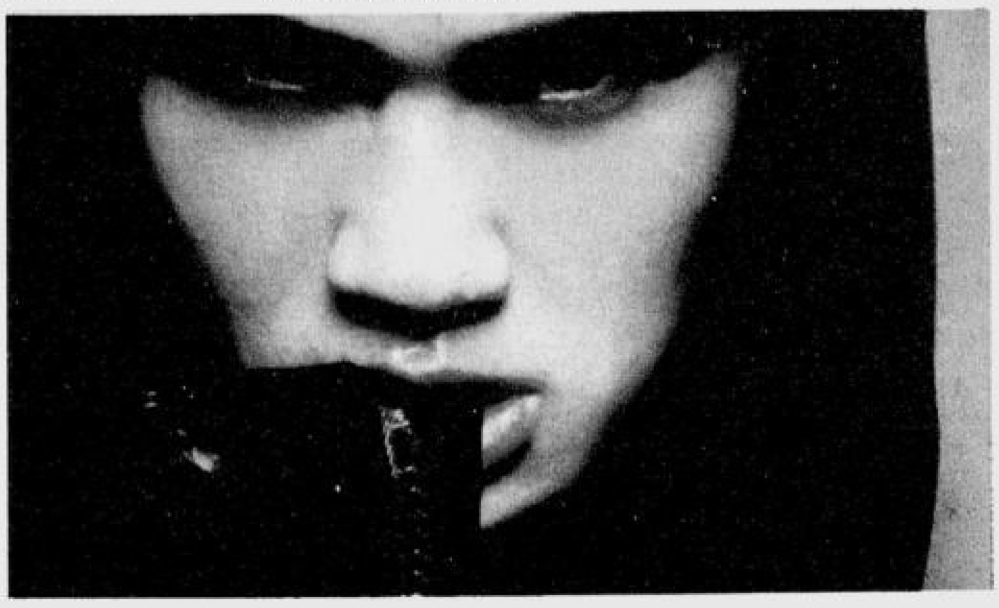
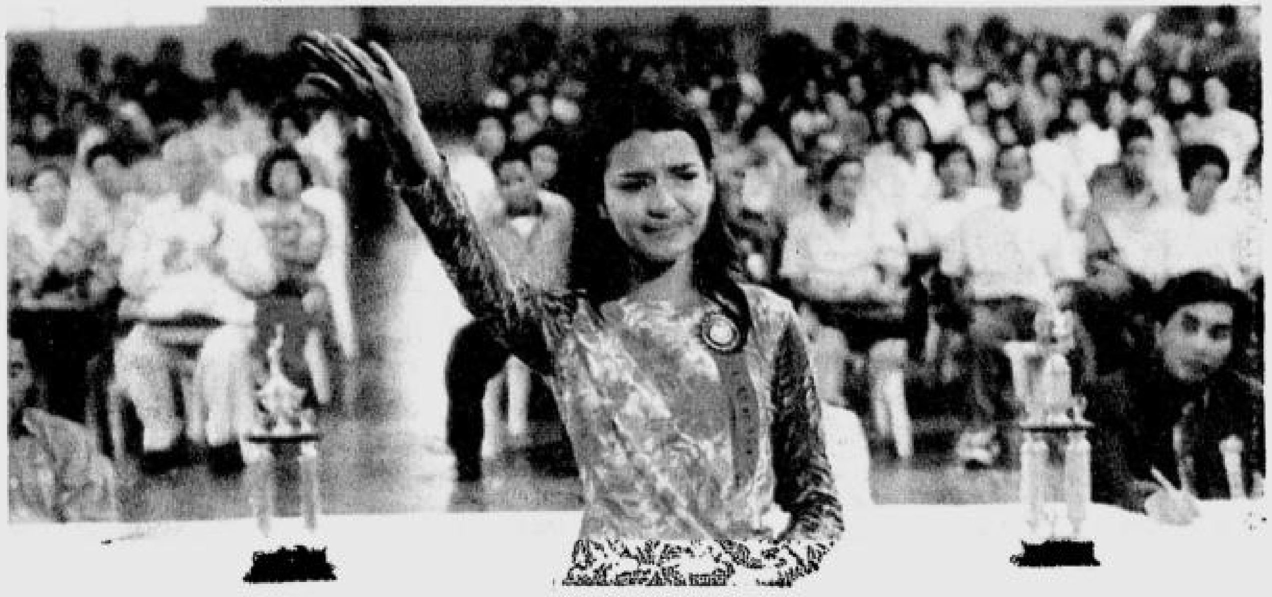


CRAWFORD. Stars in "The Exorcist: The Beginning."



DE ROSSI. Plays a teacher in "Mga Munting Tinig."

Filipino talents in Warner Bros. lineup of new films

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR the very first time, Filipino talents are featured in a significant way in the lineup of new movies released by an American film company. Warner Bros.'s list of films to be shown during the second half of 2003 includes—

Hollywood film debut

"The Exorcist: The Beginning," with young Fil-American actor-singer Billy Crawford making his Hollywood film debut in the stellar role of a possessed teenager.

Crawford, who has also been enjoying success as a teen singer and recording artist in Europe, auditioned for the role along with hundreds of young actors. What made him clinch the plum role? His innocent projection, which made the hellish attacks on him all the more shocking.

If Crawford does well in his first starring role, he could become the next big, young thing in Hollywood. Let's hope he makes it!

Possessed girl

"Exorcist: The Beginning" takes place before the events of the first "Exorcist" movie, which made a star of Linda Blair, the child actress who played the possessed girl in it.

The much-awaited youth sequel tells the story of Fr. Merrin's brush with evil while working in Africa, which led to his first encounter with demonic forces. Fr. Merrin is played by Stellan Skarsgard, Nicole Kidman's co-star in her Cannes filmfest entry, "Dogville."

The other Pinoy release on the Warner Bros. Lineup is Gil Portes' "Mga Munting Tinig," starring Alessandra de Rossi.

Film festivals

The studio decided to release the Filipino film after it was hailed in film festivals abroad. Among other citations, it won an Audience Favorite award at the Palm Springs International Film Festival.

The film tells the inspiring story of a young teacher who makes a difference in her small elementary school in a remote corner of the country, by putting up a children's choir despite the objections of many people in the small village.

Other Warner Bros. Releases to be shown later this year include—

"The Matrix Revolutions," the final chapter in the Matrix trilogy.

Epic

"The Last Samurai," an epic about Capt. Nathan Algren (Tom Cruise), an American military officer hired by the Emperor of Japan to train the first Japanese army in the art of modern warfare.

"Mystic River," Clint Eastwood's thriller about three men and their families coming to terms with a brutal murder in Boston.

"The In-Laws": When prospective fathers-in-law Steve (Michael Douglas) and Jerry (Albert Brooks) meet for the first time to celebrate their children's impending marriage, the cake hits the fan!

Big swindle

"Matchstick Men": Con artist Roy (Nicolas Cage) and his protégé Frank (Sam Rockwell) are on the verge of a big swindle when Roy's teenage daughter unexpectedly arrives, and jeopardizes his high-risk scam.

"The Big Bounce": In Hawaii, a charismatic drifter (Owen Wilson) forms a dubious alliance with a powerful businessman (Morgan Freeman), while hooking up with a seductress to double-cross a wealthy developer. Gary Sinise, Charlie Sheen and Sara Foster also star.

Book on George Lucas could inspire writers and filmmakers

From page C1

direct a film again!

Unaware

This is why for "The Empire Strikes Back," Lucas hired Irvin Kershner to direct the movie while "Return of the Jedi" was directed by Richard Marquand, a Welsh filmmaker. And yet, people were largely unaware that these directors were at the helm of these two giant blockbusters. It was still Lucas who ran the whole show—from concept down to merchandising.

From the time "Star Wars," "The Empire Strikes Back" and Return of the Jedi" were first shown in the late '70s, up to five years ago when these films were re-released, the epic trilogy earned $1.3 billion.

With the billions of dollars that these movies raked in at the box office, Lucas established a computer company and pursued the possibility of what would become modern digital film editing. While most filmmakers make lousy businessmen, Salewicz says Lucas was the opposite. He knew where to put his money and could easily recover his investments in so little a time.

Close friend

But he didn't abandon his love for films. His own movie outfit, Lucasfilm, made the go-signal to produce another movie," Raiders of the Lost Ark." This time he collaborated with his close friend, the legendary Steven Spielberg. The tandem resulted in another colossal hit. As Salewicz writes: "in 'Raiders,' every intellectual muscle and intuitive brain cell are at a peak tone, honed by his working partnership with George Lucas." As a producer, Lucas gave Spielberg a deadline—finish shooting "Raiders" in 85 days. Spielberg had the job done in 73.

A clear vision and focus for films, technology savvy, collaborating and connecting with the right people, a strong knack for business, being unafraid to take risks and an enduring persistence—these are the qualities which make George Lucas a Hollywood legend. The book takes readers from Tunisia to Norway and to other parts of the globe and narrates how George Lucas inspiringly fleshes out his unique ideas from mere pencil sketches into grand, unforgettable films.

'Conspiracy' dramatizes man's . . .

From page C3

argument about whether Jews who marry Germans can be exempted.

Heydrich feels that time is of the essence, and proposes that the Jews be eliminated *now*. He bullies everyone into accepting his point of view and, since he's the head of the feared SS, the others can only toe the line.

The discussion shifts to the mechanics: Shooting millions of Jews would not be cost-efficient because of the amount of bullets involved, which the military needs for the war. Heydrich then brings up gas chambers. Someone had crafted a system that would kill many people in the fastest way possible.

The discussion turns sick when someone remarks on what happens to gassed individuals. They turn pink, he says, and everyone has a good laugh. One official is particularly fond of cracking jokes at the expense of the Jews. The rest treat them as non-entities.

Some discussants have reservations about the "final solution" but they don't have the guts to go against Heydrich. One of them states that Adolf Hitler had denied that he wanted to exterminate the Jews, and Heydrich says the Fuhrer will keep denying it. In short, his denial is only for public consumption.

In fact, the meeting at the villa was kept secret. Eichmann prepared 30 top-secret copies of the minutes of the meeting which were later ordered destroyed. Luckily for history, one copy survived and became the basis for this movie.

Villainy

Branagh is superb as Heydrich, who has no qualms about killing millions of Jews. His villainy is underplayed—not the usual Nazi caricatured in many war movies. He looks like your typical corporate man, except he's in SS gear.

Tucci portrays Eichmann as an amiable and efficient dinner host but, during the discussion, he's the one who provides the data to support Heydrich's plan.

Eichmann survived the war and continued the program. He managed to elude the authorities until the '60s.

"Conspiracy" concentrates on the 90-minute-dinner as though it were a live TV coverage. The movie never shows the execution of the plan, since we are already familiar with that.

It's always puzzled me how anyone could think of mass murder involving millions of Jews without giving up his humanity. After watching the movie, I'm still in the dark.

Is it because they never anticipated the consequences of their actions? Did Hitler hold such a spell over them that they obeyed him blindly?

At the end of "Conspiracy," there is no relief for the viewer, no happy ending, no character he can sympathize with. When the final frames indicate what happened to the 15, the frustration continues because many of them escaped prosecution.

Life is truly unfair but, by dramatizing man's inhumanity to man, the hope is that future generations will learn from the Jews' tragedy, and make sure it doesn't happen again.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MAY 24 - MAY 30

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[illegible]	6:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 8:00 Arriba, Arriba 9:00 Fillyiesta Cinema 10:30 Kontrobersyal 11:30 "F" 12:00 Sports Unlimited	5:00 PBA Games 7:00 Yan Ang Pinoy 8:00 The Working President 9:00 14th Asian Games 2002 (Replay) 11:00 Business and Leisure	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Mirror, Mirror 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Viva Box Office *Bagets I* 11:00 Go For Gold	6:00 Dragon Ball Z 6:30 Imbestigador 7:30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 Kakabakaba 9:30 Blockbuster Cinema 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Master Showman	6:00 Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo 7:00 7 Days 8:00 John Doe 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse	5:00 PBA Provincial Game 8:00 Amazing Twins 9:00 To Be Announced 10:00 Bakbakan sa Maynila	6:00 Combat Mission 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	5:30 CBS Evening News 6:00 E! News Weekend 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On
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'Busted' has its own lighthearted charm

By Noelani Torre

BUSTED, three brash young men with some musical skills, are unabashedly pop, and unabashedly boys—but they're not a boy band. No dance steps and Ken doll good looks for this lot. What you get are loads of guitars, screwy haircuts, and enough cheekiness to last you a lifetime.

Rough edges

Busted is made up of 18-year-old James Bourne, 17-year-old Charlie Simpson, and 19-year-old Matt Jay—all Britishers who, as their publicity boasts, have kept their "rough edges" and eschewed the traditional pop polishing route called "Development."

Their self-titled debut album "Busted" (Universal Island Records) was released earlier this year, and the guys are slowly but surely climbing their way up the charts with their debut single "What I Go to School For." That song's video has been playing on MTV Asia, so folks are beginning to sit up and take note of the band.

It's not hard to notice a group as eager to be heard as this one. With their singular way of expressing the familiar pangs of teenage angst and hangups, they certainly stand out from the rest of the pop crowd.

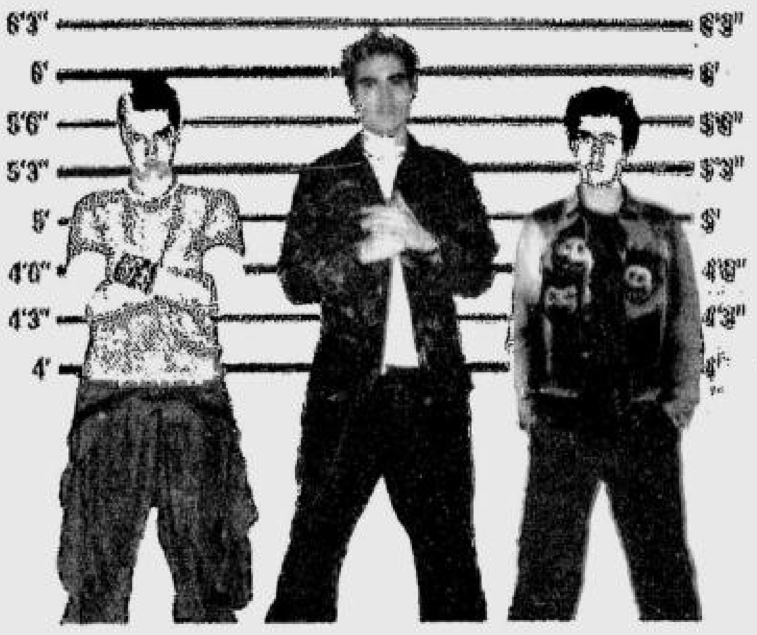
Lightweight

Sure, they're lightweight, but they don't moan and croon about love in every song, either. More importantly, they don't take themselves seriously, and they sound like they're having fun. We don't hear enough of that these days.

"What I Go To School For" is the album's opening track, and it's also one of its strongest pieces. It's upbeat, the chorus is catchy, and the subject matter itself is the stuff of classic teacher-crush adolescent fantasy.

It's silly, but honest and a little naughty as this stanza illustrates: "I fight my way to front of class, to get the best view of her ass/ I drop a pencil on the floor, she bends down and shows me more . . ." And so on, in a like vein.

"Year 3000" is equally catchy and mindless in a funny way. the band's vision of the rosy future is something only hormone-saturated young males can think of. "Triple-breasted women swim around town . . . totally naked!" they shout.



BUSTED. Sound like they're having fun.

This will probably be their next hit single, especially if the soon-to-be-released video they've been working on turns out to be as wacky and playful as the song itself.

The album also includes more conventional pop ballads like "Losing You," "Sleeping With the Light On," and "Without You," which are, for some reason or other, all about absentee lovers. They're also the slowest songs in the album, and aren't that memorable melody-wise.

Voices

They give the guys a chance to display their voices, however, and though they're not brilliant singers (and the songs aren't technically challenging), they're not at all bad. At least they can all sing, unlike some other so-called singing groups.

The rest of the songs reflect the guys' different personalities, and since they wrote their own songs, we can assume that the sentiment in them is more or less sincere.

There are all sorts of songs here, including a love song to Britney Spears titled, well, "Britney." The song articulates the dead-end longing of every other heterosexual male adolescent on this planet with access to MTV: "Sweating all over your video,/ Watching every scene in slow mo./ Trackin' you down on the internet/ 'Coz i ain't seen you naked yet . . . I want you, Britney." —Etc.!

"Crash and Burn" is about the absolute mortification of being turned down that only a teenager can feel, as expressed rather simply in the chorus: "I asked you to dance at the disco/ But you said No!/ The whole world was watching and laughing/ On the day that I crashed and burned . . ./ At your feet!"

Losers

There are songs about "psycho girlfriends," an irritating "Dawson's geek," girls who lead guys on and keep changing their minds about "going all the way," and losers who end up living with Ms Mackenzie of "What I Go to School For" fame.

This CD isn't for everyone, No doubt, some will find it immature and frivolous. The boys can be a little too boyish, and some of the songs do tend to blend into the next one, sound-wise. Still, they're pretty harmless, and though lightweight they're more amusing than most, and certainly more honest.

Busted still has some growing up to do, but this adolescent musical hodgepodge that is their first album has its own lighthearted charm, So it you're in the mood for no-brainer but not hackneyed pop, "Busted" could be the album for you.

BRANAGH and Tucci as SS officers who think up the grisly "final solution" to the Jewish "problem."

'Conspiracy' dramatizes man's inhumanity to man

By Edmund L. Sicam

THE OPENING scenes of "Conspiracy," an original HBO movie airing on May 28, look like they came out of a Merchant-Ivory film.

The movie takes place in a stately villa surrounded by abundant greenery. Preparations are underway for an evening reception and the household staff is busy setting the table and making the place look presentable for important guests.

The chef is working on his culinary creations and a dignified-looking gentleman (Stanley Tucci) is making sure that everything is just right.

Grand entrance

We half-expect to see Anthony Hopkins as a butler who's secretly in love with his fellow worker, Emma Thompson. Instead of Hopkins, it is Kenneth Branagh who makes a grand entrance, but his problem has nothing to do with affairs of the heart.

Branagh plays SS General Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Reich Main Security Office and the infamous SS, while Tucci is SS Lt. Col. Adolf Eichmann, head of the SS Jewish Affairs office.

Eichmann's gentle manner at the start of the film masks a sadistic nature that emerges when he scolds his staff and slaps a soldier goofing off on the job. The two have invited 13 high-ranking government officials to discuss how to deal with a pesky problem.

When everyone is finally gathered around the table, it is clear that the problem they're talking about are the Jews. They've assembled tonight to discuss the "final solution!"

Knowing now what came out of that meeting—the extermination of millions of Jews in gas chambers—I shudder at how the Germans in the dining room could discuss the topic so blithely. When someone brings up the topic of gas chambers, I wonder how they could enjoy the food and wine they consume.

The Jewish "problem" is discussed in the same manner that a corporation's board of directors would analyze a financial problem, like the effects of high interest rates. In this case, Heydrich declares that it has become harder for the Third Reich to control the proliferation of Jews in Germany and other occupied territories. It is imperative, therefore, that a "final solution" be undertaken to eliminate the "problem" permanently.

Eradication

Although participants agree that the Jewish race must be eradicated, there is disagreement on how to accomplish this. Some want Jews sterilized so that they would not bear any more children and the Jewish race would become extinct. There is also an

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Manay Ichu has big dreams for the Filipino movie industry

By Agnes P. de Guzman and Ronald G. Mangubat

MARICHU Vera-Perez clearly remembers the time when she would tag along with her father, the late Dr. Jose Perez, during shootings for their family-owned Sampaguita Pictures. Those were the days of the big film studios, when contract stars were packaged as glamorous demigods who lorded it over the silver screen.

Glitter

But more than being enamored with the superficial glitter of show business, Manay Ichu absorbed and became fascinated with what went on behind the camera.

She studied costume and production design, sound, film editing and the other aspects of movie production, down to the publicity and promotions phase.

When her father passed away, it was Manay Ichu who took over the studio. Years later, she became so involved in moviemaking that she found herself engrossed in the problems of the entire movie industry.

"Naging industry-oriented *ako, nagkaroon ako ng* macro vision," she tells us. And true enough, she has been a strong advocate for the promotion and betterment of Philippine films. She gets invited to all sorts of symposia and workshops on film appreciation, scriptwriting, and film and TV production.

Younger sister

Today, Manay Ichu concentrates her energies on producing "Nagmamahal, Manay Gina," the weekday TV soap aired over GMA-7 and hosted by her younger sister, Gina de Venecia. She calls it an outlet for her creative juices.

Despite the many aces up her sleeve, Manay Ichu remains simple and down-to-earth. As a matter of fact, her greatest joy is in being a doting grandmother to her grandchildren. She is truly her father's daughter — visionary, caring, compassionate, inimitable. Q and A:

Among the children of Dr. Perez, you were the only one who followed his footsteps. Why is that?

Production process

Because I was closest to my father, and he wanted me to join him. *Nung una, may pagkarebelde ako.* But slowly, I learned to enjoy it. *Nahilig akong una sa* costume design, then *sa* production design. And things just picked up. I fell in love with every step of the production process, including the post-production stage.

MANAY ICHU. Truly her father's daughter.

Nahilig din ako sa film editing. I'd sit with the film editor— *nung una, pa*-observe-observe *lang, hanggang sa bumabad na talaga ako. Di mo ako mapaalis.*

Nakuha ko din yung idea *ng* brainstorming *sa* father *ko, yung batuhan ng* ideas. *Hanggang ngayon dala ko 'yon. Doon na nagsimula ang pagmamahal ko sa industriya.*

How would you assess the film industry today?

It's in bad shape! Three to four years *na, makikita mo,* all the big stars, *lumalabas sa* TV. *Dati, di mo makikita 'yan.*

What is the problem?

Unang una na yung tax. *Wala talagang* producer *na yumaman.*

Building

Di ba ang status symbol *ng mga Pinoy, ang mga mayayaman nagkakaroon ng* building *sa* Makati? *May nakita ka na bang* producer *na nagkaroon ng ganoon? Wala!*

What joy do you derive from producing your current TV show?

It's an outlet for my creative juices. *Basta* something creative and moving, *nag-e-*enjoy *ako. Ayoko ng mga* still pictures and landscapes. *Gusto ko, may* movement!

What's the most difficult part of producing TV shows?

To stay within the allotted budget. To be able to earn, you should not go beyond your budget. *Sa* movies *mas may* leeway, *pero sa* TV, *hindi gaanon.*

How would you compare our moviegoers, then and now?

There has been an improvement in their taste and preferences. They're more demanding. There is currently a wider audience of people who appreciate films—like the last film festival, *karamihan ng* audience belonged to the younger set.

Technology

Ang gusto nila, yung advanced *sa* technology. *Nag-e-*enjoy *sila sa mga* "Lastikman," "Spirit Warriors," etc.

Why haven't we been able to penetrate the Asian film market?

Yang mga Asian films, *malaki ang tulong ng gobyerno nila. Lalo na sa* festival market. *Tayo, wala. O kung meron man, konti lang.*

So, is there still hope for the industry?

I never say die. We always say the industry is dying, but I've never given up hope. *Kasi magagaling ang Pinoy. Di pa lang tayo siguro sinuswerte. Alam mo, yung mga* countries like Hong Kong and Indonesia, nag-iimport *lang yan ng mga* cameraman, director, etc. from us. *Ang iba kasing mga* producers *natin,* very short and limited *ang* vision. *Ang gusto nila mabawi kaagad ang* investment *nila. Wala sa* vision *ang mag*-penetrate *sa* Asian market.

Nung Manila International Film Festival, there were a lot of inquiries about our action pictures. *Kung naalala mo noon, ang nag*-hit *si* Weng Weng! *Naloka ako!* (Laughs)

Kaso ang problema, yung sound *ng mga* films *natin* is not at par with international standards.

Festivals

To penetrate, you have to spend. You have to attend festivals and study the market. *Yung iba nating* producers, *maka-tsamba lang ng* big hit, *mag-bo-*blow out *na,* not thinking of investing their money in future projects.

What is your vision for the film industry?

Alam nyo, kung di lang sa peace and order problem *natin, ang* vision *ko e gawin itong* film center of Asia. *Bilib na bilib yung mga* foreigners *sa mga* talent, technicians *at* production people natin, *kasi* we can do multiple tasks. All-around *tayo. At saka,* we speak English.

What makes you happy now?

Oh, my grandchildren—all nine of them! They call me "Tutu." At first I wanted them to call me Mama Ichu, but they couldn't pronounce it, so *naging* "Tutu." And then I found out later that in the Hawaiian language *pala*, it means grandmother. So, it stuck. *Pag kasama ko ang mga apo ko, nakakalimutan ko na lahat!*

After eight, Ozon delights viewers with two women

By Catherine Bremer

OZON. His film is a strong contender for the Palm d'Or.
REUTERS

CANNES, France—After cooping up eight women in a country house for the acclaimed "8 Women," Francois Ozon puts just two under one roof in "Swimming Pool," a suspense-packed drama that premiered to loud applause on Sunday.

Strong contender

Seen as a strong contender for the coveted Palme d'Or award this year, "Swimming Pool" plays on the relationship between creator and muse, and stars two of the French director's favorite muses: Charlotte Rampling and Ludivine Sagnier.

"I like shutting people into closed spaces to observe them. It means you can forget about the location and concentrate on the characters," Ozon told reporters.

Vibrant, and surprising as it nears its climax, "Swimming Pool" shows the two actresses at their best. Rampling plays a frumpy English crime writer who finds herself sharing a house with a boisterous, overtly sexual young woman played by Sagnier.

Their initially hostile relationship is played out around a large blue swimming pool at a French country house belonging to the writer's London-based publisher, which is also used by his sexy, verging on vulgar, French daughter.

Muse

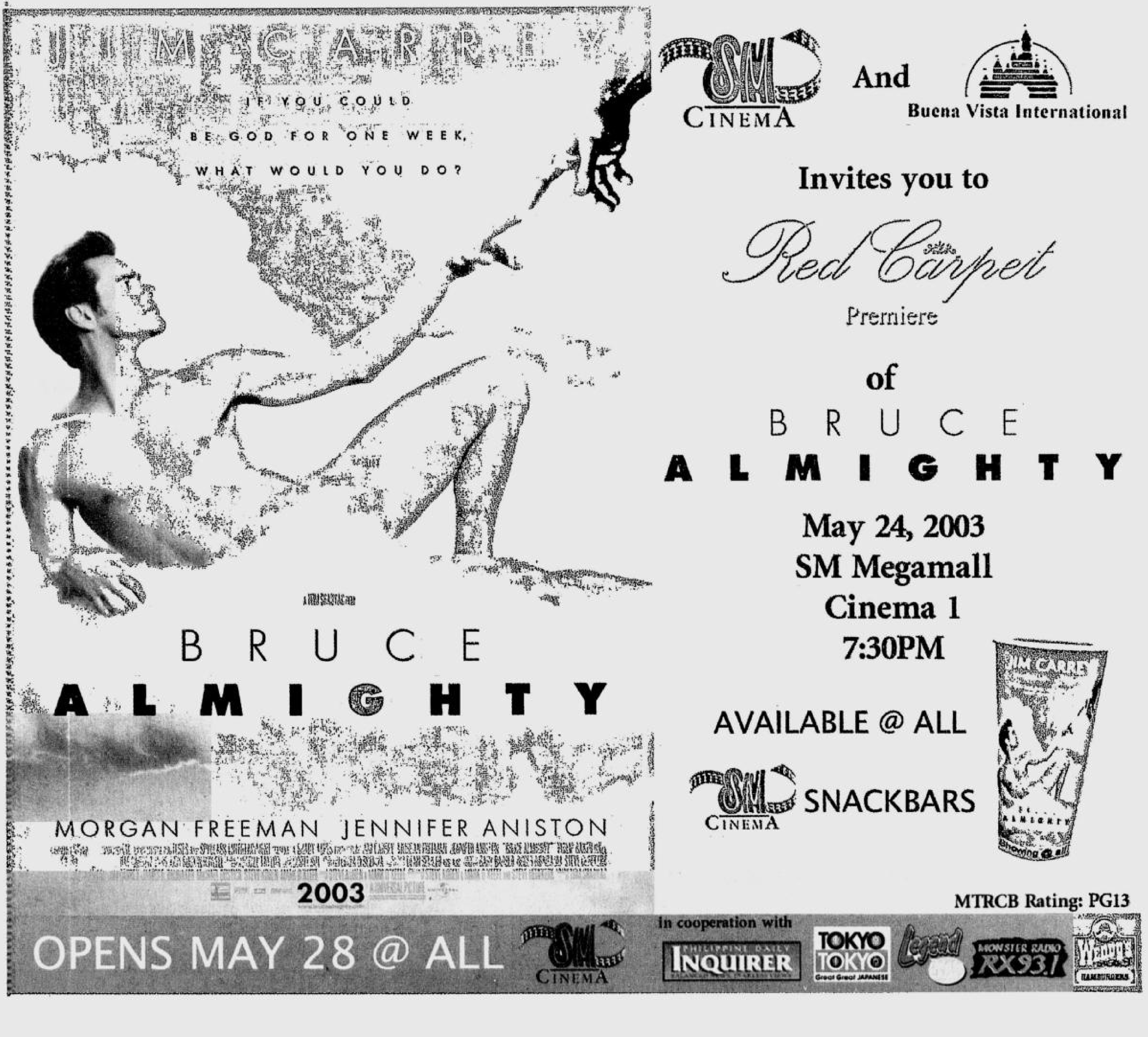
As she spies on the girl swimming and lounging around the pool, the writer begins to use her as a muse, simultaneously disgusted by and jealous of her.

Back last year in "Embrassez Qui Vous Voudrez" after a lull in her long and varied career, Rampling studied murder-mystery writers like Ruth Rendell to prepare for the part and joked that it was not so hard to play a grumpy, dejected Englishwoman.

"This deep kind of work is something I've always wanted to do. You use your own experiences like a sculptor uses tools to sculpt clay, and you interpret the role with feelings that come from a person, not an actor," Rampling told a news conference.

Sagnier, who speaks English throughout with a husky French accent, sports a flawless tan in much of the film.

"There was a lot of dieting and exercise to get my body in shape. Charlotte would eat lasagne while I had to make do with steamed fish and vegetables," said Sagnier, 23, who played drabber roles in "8 Women" and "Petites Coupures." "There are lot of tools you can use for the physical side. I quite like the idea of being a kind of doll that can be dressed up and transformed for different roles." Reuters



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WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
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Kidman knows what it's like to be a fan

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—Nicole Kidman is pursued by paparazzi and tracked by tabloids wherever she goes—but she has never forgotten what it was like to be a star-struck fan.

KIDMAN . Has emerged as a major Hollywood player. AFP

Younger days

"I was a kid who waited to see Abba. I have been in that position," the elegant actress said in Cannes, reflecting on her younger days when she desperately wanted to get a glimpse of the rich and famous.

At the age of 10, she vividly remembers being taken by some production designer friends of her parents to visit the set of "The Year of Living Dangerously."

"I saw Mel Gibson from afar and I remember thinking 'Ah, he looked at me.' He has absolutely no recollection of that happening."

Goldfish bowl

Some 25 years later, Kidman is living in a goldfish bowl of permanent publicity. In Cannes to promote her latest movie, the challenging arthouse marathon "Dogville," she was greeted by excited fans and flashing bulbs wherever she went.

That's fine by her, all part of the package for the elegant Australian who was once just the other half of actor Tom Cruise but has now emerged as a major Hollywood player with an Oscar to her credit. *Reuters*

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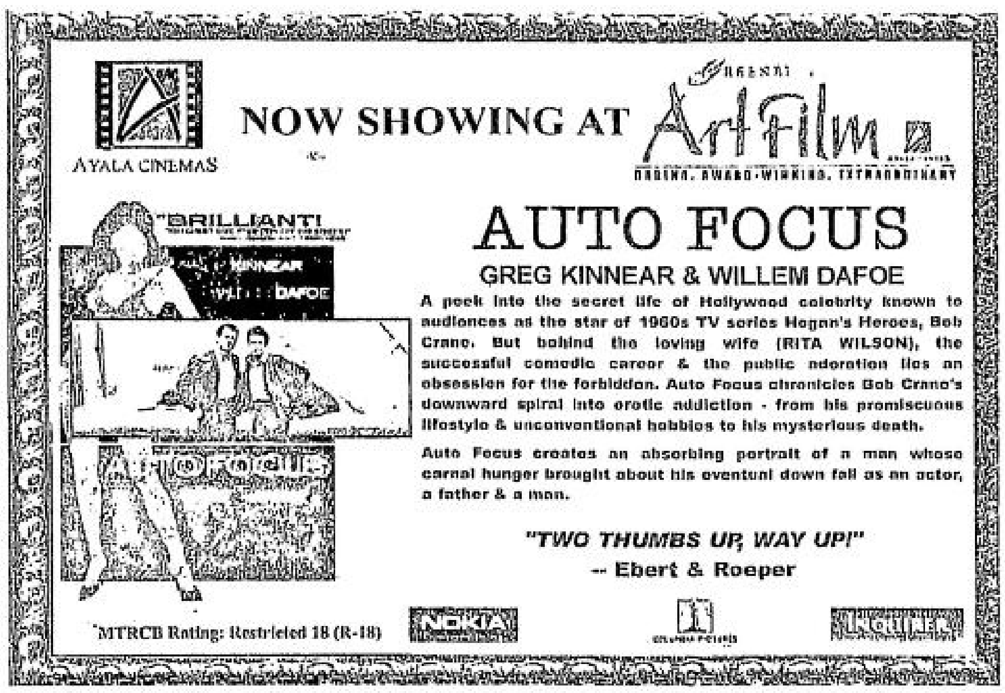
DIRECTED BY: TONY Y. REYES
AN FPJ PRODUCTIONS PRESENTATION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A peek into the secret life of Hollywood celebrity known to audiences as the star of 1960s TV series Hogan's Heroes, Bob Crane. But behind the loving wife (RITA WILSON), the successful comedic career & the public adoration lies an obsession for the forbidden. Auto Focus chronicles Bob Crane's downward spiral into erotic addiction - from his promiscuous lifestyle & unconventional hobbies to his mysterious death.

Auto Focus creates an absorbing portrait of a man whose carnal hunger brought about his eventual down fall as an actor, a father & a man.

"TWO THUMBS UP, WAY UP!"
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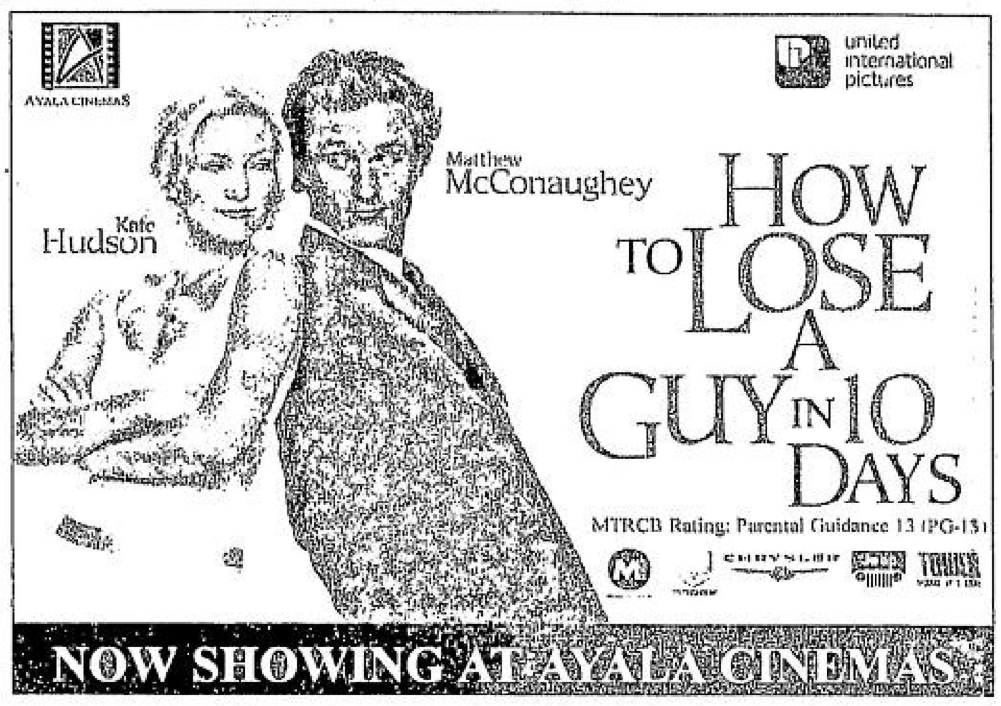
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MTRCB R-13
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夕陽天使
so close
Karen Mok Shu Qi Zhao Wei

Sexy Asian angels display amazing martial arts techniques in 'So Close'

Lynn (Shu Qi) and Sue (Zhao Wei) are sexy and beautiful sisters whose parents were brutally killed by powerful underworld figures. Disillusioned with the law and armed with amazing computer and kung fu skills (not to mention an enviable fashion style), the seductive sisters become professional assassins, killing criminals for other criminals.

Gutsy and brilliant female cop Yat Hong (Karen Mok) relentlessly pursue the sisters, who are in turn fascinated by their tough adversary.

SO CLOSE, starring Asia's most alluring and talented young actresses, features the coolest, breath-taking martial arts sequences from world-renowned director Cory Yuen, Jet Li's martial arts choreographer in THE ONE, KISS OF THE DRAGON and ROMEO MUST DIE. Don't miss it!

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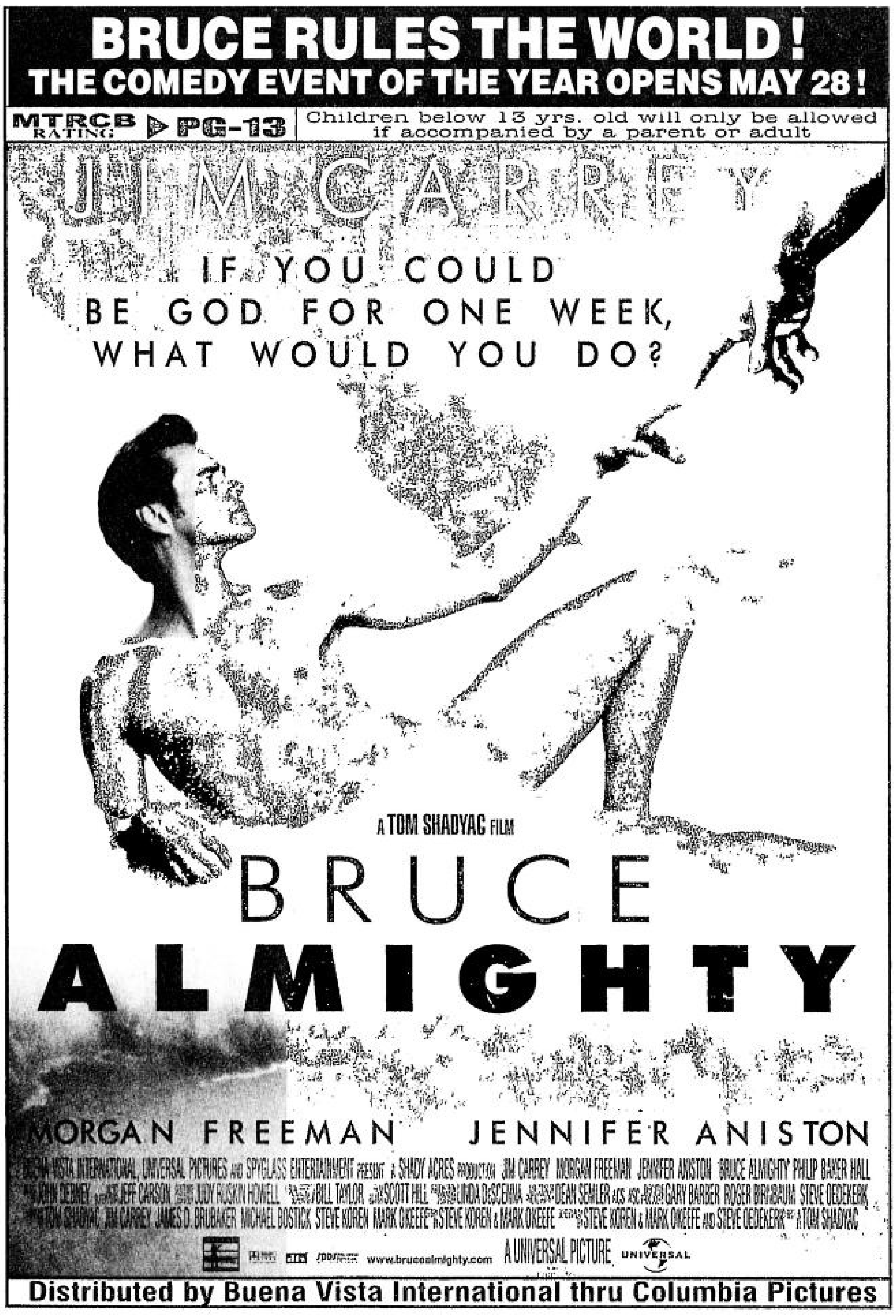
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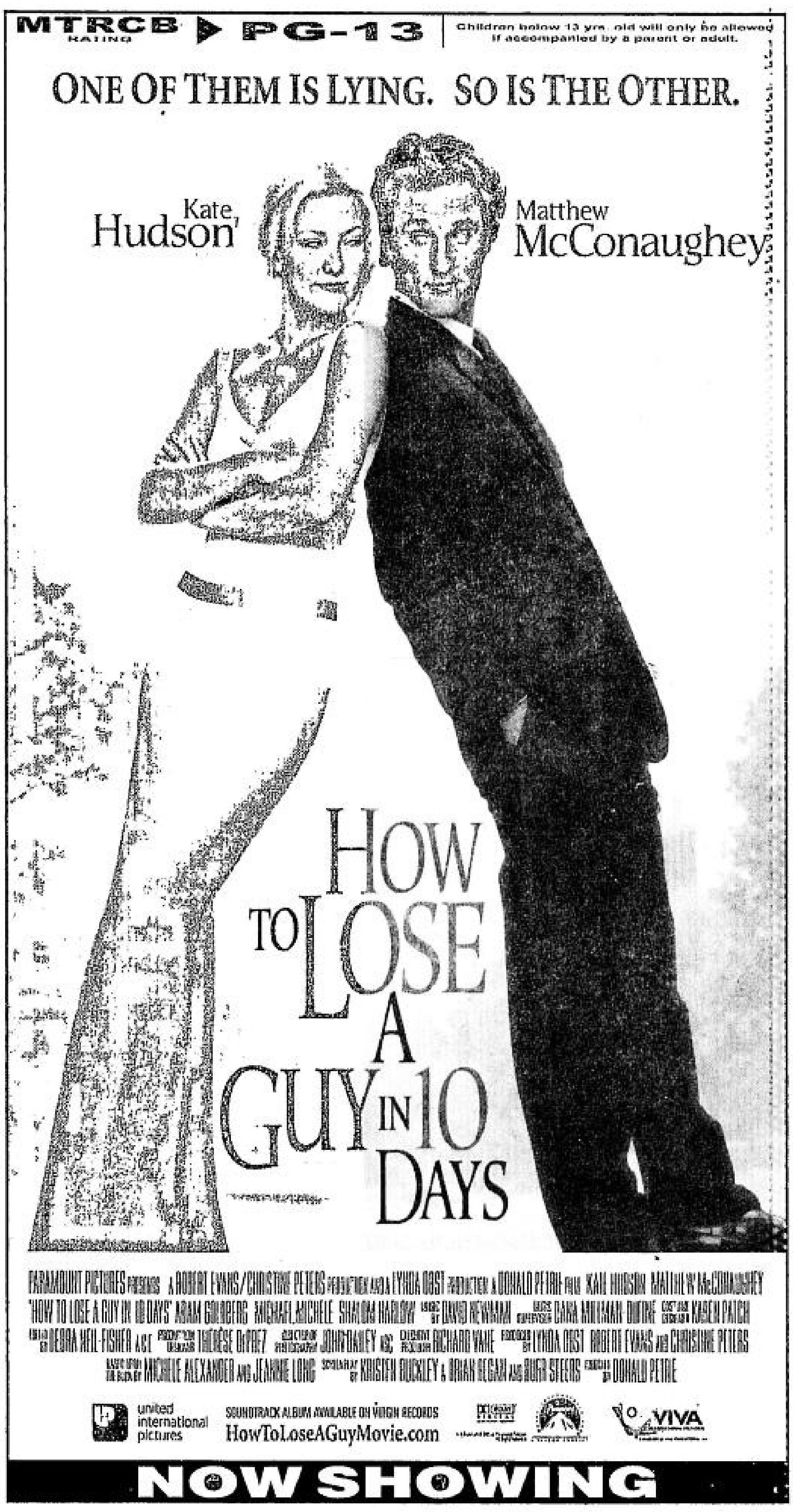
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HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
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Vignettes from the Cannes Film Festival

By Angela Doland

CANNES—Sweet, sensitive Claire Danes from TV's "My So-Called Life" fighting deadly killing machines out to destroy humanity?

Danes, who shot to fame with the 1990s series about an angst-ridden teen, is taking her first step into action flicks with "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."

Danes accompanied star Arnold Schwarzenegger and other cast members to the Cannes Film Festival to promote "Terminator 3," which opens July 2.

"It wasn't like I was itching to do an action movie," Danes told The Associated Press on Saturday.

"But this is such a great franchise, if I was going to do an action movie, I couldn't really do better than 'Terminator,'" said Danes, whose film career has centered on quieter, character-driven films like "The Hours."

In the upcoming movie, Danes plays a woman who teams up with Schwarzenegger's cyborg to fight a female terminator.

Three legendary bluesmen

Wim Wenders gave Cannes the blues.

After his hit Cuban music documentary "Buena Vista Social Club," the German director was showing "The Soul of a Man," a movie about three legendary bluesmen.

It's the first installment of "The Blues," executive-produced by Martin Scorsese. Scorsese and Clint Eastwood are among the directors making movies for the seven-part series.

Wenders' film tells the stories of Skip James, J.B. Lenoir and Blind Willie Johnson. Artists from Beck to Eagle Eye Cherry to Bonnie Raitt cover their songs.

Wenders said he hopes to get young music fans excited about the genre—"the root of all they listen to.

World premiere

Years after retiring from the screen, Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida is getting ready to make her world premiere as a sculptor.

Lollobrigida, 74, says she's been working on her art for 10 years "in secrecy and silence." She's done with the jet-setting actor's lifestyle.

"That kind of social life no longer interests me," she told Nice-Matin newspaper.

Lollobrigida is getting ready to show her bronzes this year in Moscow, Venice and Paris. Some of the works represent characters she played, including Esmeralda from 1957's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame."

Lollobrigida was back in Cannes more than 50 years after making a splash here in the original "Fanfan la Tulipe," a 1952 swashbuckling movie. Penelope Cruz plays her role in the remake that debuted in Cannes.

So how does Lollobrigida like Cruz's performance?

"She's pretty, she acts well, but I don't know her," Lollobrigida said. "However, I wish her all the success that I had in my career."

Cover

French actress Emmanuelle Beart wore white for the Cannes premiere of the World War II movie "Stranded." But people have been paying more attention to what she wasn't wearing when she posed for the cover of Elle.

Ads for the magazine—which shows Beart bathing naked—are tacked up all over France. In the photo, she's gazing into the distance with her back toward the camera.

Beart, 37, the star of "Mission: Impossible," said there was a "raison d'etre" for the cover shot.

"It showed that a woman, any woman, is still a woman at 37 years old," she told Nice-Matin.

AP

CLAIRE Danes jokes with giant scissors at the inauguration of the American Pavilion.
REUTERS

GINA Lollobrigida has stopped acting in the movies and is now a sculptor.
AFP

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MATRIX: RELOADED R13 1:35,4:30, 7:25,10:20	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 11:45,2:40, 5:35,8:30	HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS P13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

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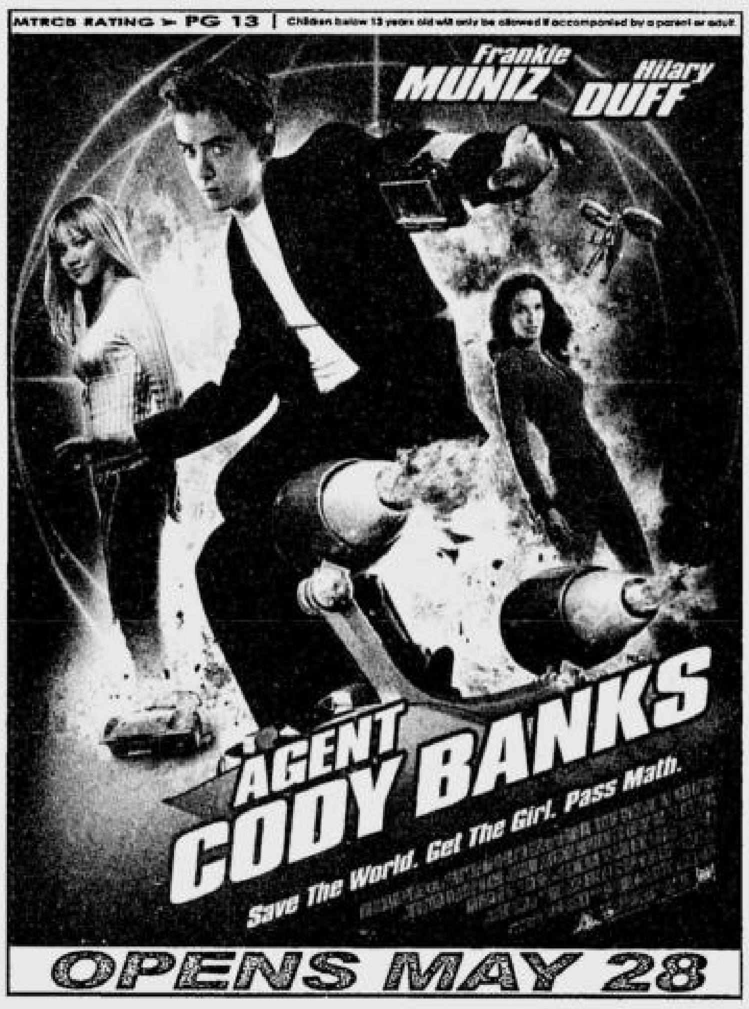

OPENS MAY 28

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A prison escapee (Slater) assumes the identity of a deceased man named Cletis Tout, but soon discovers that someone had a contract out on Cletis' life, so now the escapee has to deal with not only the police, but a hitman (Allen) as well.

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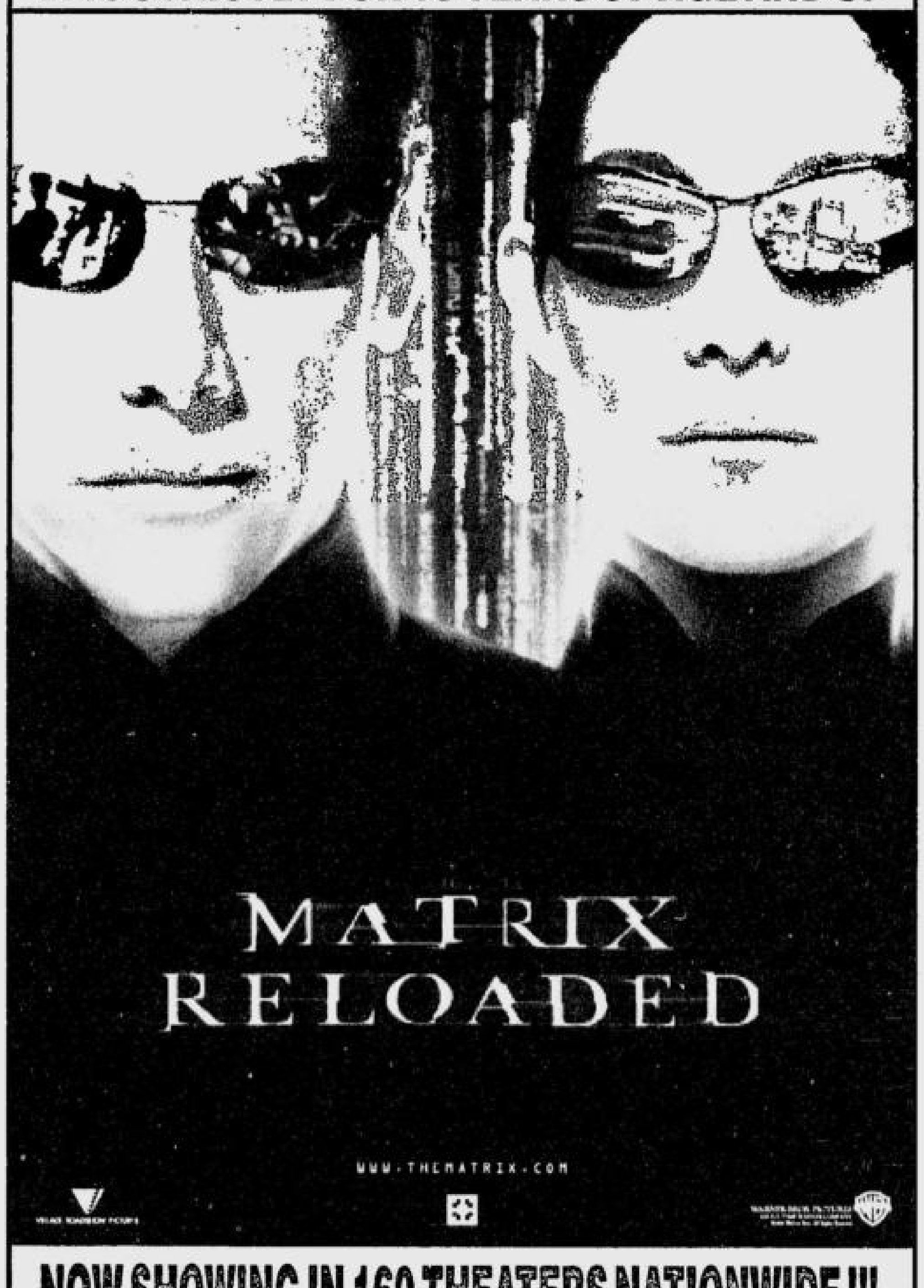

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ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	HIRAM
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	HIRAM
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
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A	DAYO
B	HIRAM
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
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CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DAYO
CINEMA-2	ANGHEL SA LUPA
CINEMA-3	HIRAM
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	X-MEN 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-6	KIKAY
CINEMA-7	TILL THERE WAS YOU
CINEMA-8	XEREX
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SO CLOSE
CINEMA-12	HOW TO LOSE A GUY
CINEMA-14	RING 0
CINEMA-15	WALANG KAPALIT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
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CINEMA 1	WALANG KAPALIT
CINEMA 2	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA 3	FINAL DESTINATION 2
CINEMA 4	NATIONAL SECURITY
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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ABC's 'The Practice' returning without six of its top stars

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—ABC's veteran legal drama "The Practice" will be back in court this TV season, but with a major cast shake-up, the jury is far from agreed on whether the Emmy-winning show from producer David E. Kelley will survive.

Eighth season

Stars Dylan McDermott, Lara Flynn Boyle and four other series regulars are leaving the cast as the show, which has been struggling in the ratings, returns this fall for an eighth season, the network and producers said on Tuesday.

Among the ensemble players who will remain on the show are Camryn Manheim, Michael Badalucco and Steve Harris, while McDermott will reportedly return for some guest appearances.

The cast changes coincide with the 11th-hour deal ABC recently struck with producers of the series—David E. Kelley Productions and 20th Century Fox Television—to keep the show on the air for a substantially lower fee.

Under the new pact, ABC agreed to restore "The Practice" to its longtime 10 p.m. Sunday time slot, but the licensing fee received by producers for the show was cut to less than half of the $6 million per episode the network had been paying, according to one source familiar with the deal.

Casting changes

In a statement, Kelley attributed casting changes to "economic and creative realities." "This is perhaps the finest group of actors and people one could ever hope to work with," he said. "I hope for all of them to return if possible, and if I'm lucky, I'll get to work with them on future projects as well."

ABC added in its statement: "While we're sorry to see these talented cast members leave the show, we're excited to discover what David has in store for 'The Practice' this fall."

The series, which follows the exploits of the defense attorneys in a Boston law firm, stumbled in the ratings this season after it was moved from Sunday to Monday nights to make room for an ABC remake of "Dragnet." Exiting with McDermott and Boyle, two of the most recognizable stars from the series, will be original cast members Kelli Williams and Lisa Gay Hamilton, along with Marla Sokoloff, who joined the cast in its second season, and Chyler Leigh, who signed on this past season.

Their departures were especially jarring given that McDermott and four of the others appeared in New York last week at an ABC presentation of its new schedule for advertisers.

Principal players

"The Practice" is hardly the first ensemble series to face major casting make-overs. Veteran dramas like NBC's "ER" and "Law & Order" and the ABC cop show "NYPD Blue" have gradually replaced many of their stars over the years and still managed to thrive. But it is rare for so many principal players to leave their show all at once.

One source told Reuters the cast shake-up was driven less by financial considerations than by Kelley's desire to bring fresh blood to the show, which won an Emmy for outstanding drama series in 1999. The source added that the producers plan to add several well-known actors to the cast. Reuters

MCDERMOTT AND BOYLE. Only two of the lead players who are leaving the series for good.

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The genesis of 'chic,' the scent of solitude, a New Age Madonna

By Marge C. Enriquez

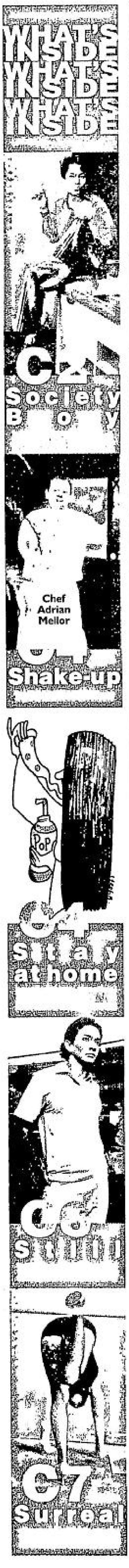
AN exposé on the shams of fashion and consumerism makes such clichés as "must-have" and "best buys" as obsolete as last season's wardrobe.

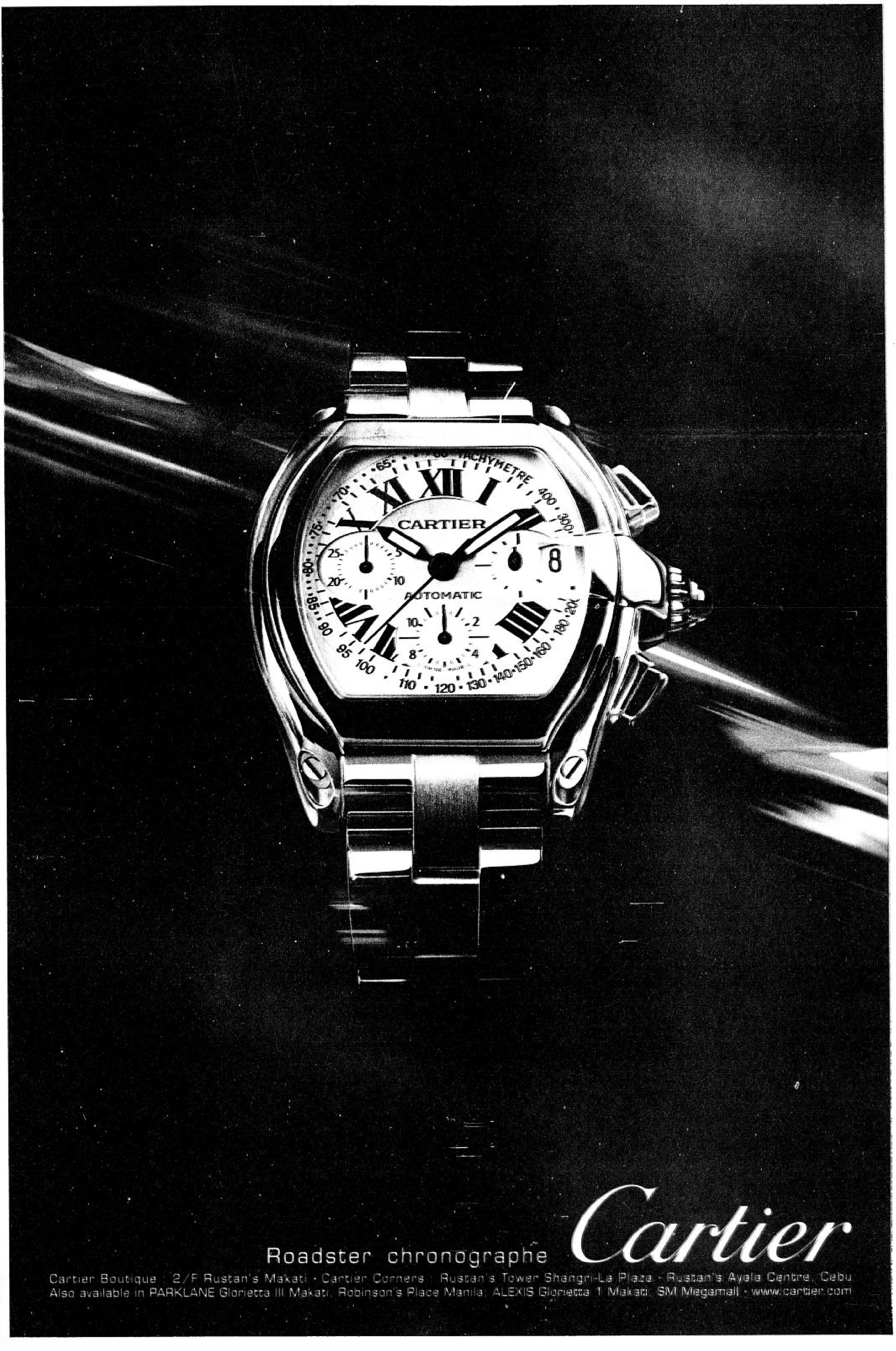
Michelle Lee's "Fashion Victim," which is being reviewed in this issue by **Cherish Garcia-Hernandez,** gives us an unprecedented perspective of fashion and Western pop culture. Lee blows the whistle on the fashion industry and focuses on the engrossing, yet antagonizing, methods in which it is shaping or de-forming our values. Lee describes the genesis of "chic"–that wheel of style that keeps consumers glued to a perpetual cycle of conspicuous consumption, spinning an illusionary ecstasy until the next trend sets in and wallets have been hopelessly dented.

It would seem as though our lives have been invented and are now ruled by men and women who "know" exactly what we need and who just happen to have it for us, beautifully packaged and temptingly priced. "If you wish to be chic or socially acceptable, then you must have the right clothes, cars, gadgets, etc." None of which is cheap, by the way.

"Fashion Victim" comes at a time when people are weary of addiction to style over substance. Lee's book makes us realize that we use fashion to interpret self-worth, and that shopping for ego really just props an impoverished sense of identity.

THE GENESIS/ C5





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By Teddy Y. Montelibano
Contributor
(Fifth of six parts)

Photo by Chito Vecina
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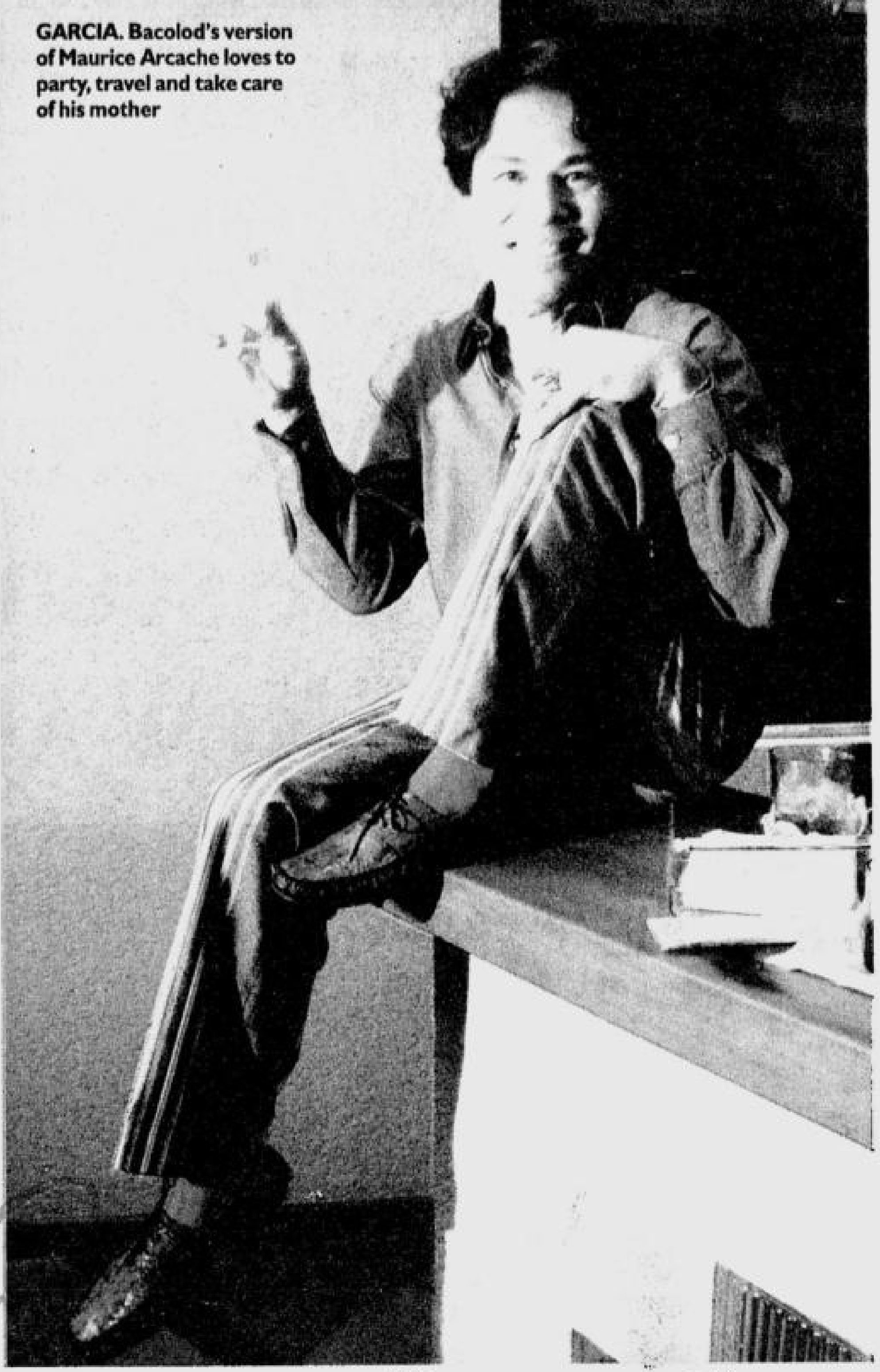

GARCIA. Bacolod's version of Maurice Arcache loves to party, travel and take care of his mother

IN the spring of 1987, Edouard Lacson Garcia, was having an espresso at the Café L'Opera in Paris waiting for a girlfriend, Mila Gelvezon, sister of Paris-based artist Ofelia Gelvezon-Tequi. He watched Nipa, his Lhasa Apso, nibble at the sole of an elderly Parisian lady seated at a table near his.

The old lady was shooing Nipa away. In vain, it seemed, as the dog kept coming back to her table. Soon she was screaming, "Take this dog away from me!" In French, of course.

Garcia thought as he tried to pull back Nipa, "How could anyone get so nervous around such a lovable dog?" Again and again he coaxed, "Come Nipa! Can't you see she wants to be alone?"

He is relating the incident today, nearly two decades later: "I kept repeating: 'She wants to be alone?' And then it hit me, and I told myself, I do not ever want to be like her. I do not want to become an old person in Paris, living alone."

In less than a week, Garcia had left the City of Light to return to the Philippines. Thus ended over 25 years amongst the haute monde in the French capital.

Not long before the incident with Nipa and the old Parisienne, Garcia's mentor of sorts-Walter Sherck, an old, wealthy distinguished Belgian gentleman of Jewish descent-had visited the Philippines and was a guest at the ancestral home in Bacolod, capital city of Negros Occidental.

Once back in Paris, Sherck told Garcia: "Edouard, you should go back to the Philippines and enjoy life." Garcia asked, "What do you mean?" His friend explained, "You can work your ass off here in Europe or in America and be successful, but you will no longer find that kind of life anywhere else."

Garcia understood. Sherck, well-heeled though he was, could never keep his valet for the weekend; at 5 p.m., his chauffeur took off; and neither could he keep his cook on standby.

What Sherck experienced then-which is still true now-was families in Bacolod with live-in help, always ready to pick up after the masters of the house and their guests, and generally making life pleasant. All the time. This was the kind of life Garcia had left when he flew to Paris in 1971, and to which he came back in 1987. He came home, he says, to "mama, papa, maids."

Spoiled brat

The youngest son of Dr. Eduardo and Nena Garcia, a society couple, Edouard has always lived a charmed life. Tall, good-looking, and irrepressibly charming, he grew up the darling of his doting parents and two elder brothers. By his own account, he was a brat. "I would run down the corridors of La Salle Bacolod screaming when I was in grade school and all the teachers would come out laughing, applauding, and saying, 'Oh, how cute!'"

The Bacolod he grew up in during the 1950s and 1960s was immensely prosperous; Negros Occidental produced more than half of the total inventory of Philippine sugar, a prime commodity that commanded premium prices in the protected US market.

"It was a simple life," he recalls. "Everyone knew everyone else, and we had a party every weekend to which everybody was invited."

Sure, it was "simple" in the sense that party fare was usually just sandwiches, spaghetti, and soda. But the kids who came to those parties were well-dressed and arrived in style-driving, or driven in, the latest model automobiles. In Bacolod at the time, automobiles did not mean just four-wheeled things. It meant Mercedes Benzes, Buicks, Oldsmobiles, Jeep Wagoneers, Cadillacs, Lincoln Continentals and the like.

"It was said that there were more Mercedes Benzes in Bacolod than there were in Manila," Garcia says. He was always in the company of Bacolod's elite, and in the weekend parties, he was the most fashionable. That, and because he was peerless on the dance floor, he was surrounded by the prettiest girls.

Not by any stretch of anyone's imagination could Garcia's growing up years be called, well, "simple." The term "party animal" was probably coined for Garcia's folks. Ed and Nena Garcia, one of the handsomest couples in Negros then, threw the best parties in Bacolod; the wide, well-lit grounds around their manse was the scene of numerous, well-attended gatherings.

I myself grew up in Negros, and I remember catching a glimpse of Nena Garcia in jodhpurs and boots astride a beautiful chestnut mare. Dr. Garcia was a horse aficionado and was the first to put up a stable in the province, purchasing, among others, Australian quarter horses from the D'Rossa Teodoros and Dr. Oscar Jacinto.

The entire family rode horseback. The boy Edouard was trained in dressage by his father and Tim Teodoro, a skill that stood him in good stead when he was introduced to European high society.

After high-school Garcia had a brief stint at the Ateneo, where he enrolled in pre-med, intending to follow in his father's footsteps. "My dad was the first to graduate summa cum laude in pre-med at the Ateneo," he says. But it was not his calling. "I remember spending five hours of lab work in chemistry class and saying to myself, this is definitely not me!"

He labored through a full year, for it was not until he was held up inside fellow Ilonggo Maurice Arcache's beauty parlor, Tiffany's that he finally made up his mind to return to Bacolod. "A UP (University of the Philippines) organization had voted me among the Top 10 Campus Pacemakers and the awards night was a formal event at the old Manila Hilton. I wore a tuxedo, Cory Quirino was my date-I was her first date, and she was still wearing braces! Mama flew to Manila with the diamond solitaire which my Lola, Josefita Lacson, gave me as a high-school graduation gift. After the event, Mama wanted to bring back my ring to Bacolod for safekeeping and I said no, I had parties to attend and wear the ring to. A week later, I was in Maurice's parlor and there was a holdup. I was robbed of my ring. That was it; I packed my bags."

The incident traumatized Garcia, who swore he would never be comfortable in Manila again. He took up a commerce course in La Salle, Bacolod and after graduating from college in 1970, his folks allowed him to go to Europe.

Revered grounds

He was 21 years old and ready to take on the Continent. He flew to Paris and took French at the Sorbonne. That lasted a year. He then enrolled in a two-year course in one of Paris' best fashion schools, Le'Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture Parisienne.

He did not know how to iron a dress, put thread through a needle or cut thread properly. "I would bite the thread with my teeth and all these Parisianas would scream in horror, 'No-no-no-no-no! One must always cut thread with a pair of scissors!'" Nevertheless, he charmed his way through fashion school.

His first job after the two-year course was with the House of Esterel, and then with Guy Laroche. Garcia describes his experience in haute couture work thus: "I was on revered grounds, everything was refined, everyone was soft-spoken-except in the fitting rooms. I was with the creative team, we were not involved with money, with selling. We were told to do whatever we wanted to do."

Garcia became a major designer for Guy Laroche's men's line. His crowning glory was when he was put in charge of designing celebrity tennis champion Bjorn Borg's entire wedding ensemble.

A friend, Raymond Fuentes was living in Hamburg with a rich lover. The couple often invited Edouard to visit. It was Fuentes who told him, "No one knows you in Paris but you must make sure your address is the right address."

Rarified circles

Thus did he come to live in a studio atop a building along Avenue Foch, one of Paris' posh-est address. Created by Emperor Napoleon III, Avenue Foch was formerly called Avene de l'Imperatrice and Avenue du Bois. It starts from the Arc de Triomphe and stretches down to the Bois de Boulogne.

Says Garcia: "Everyday I would look down from my window and see liveried chauffeurs lined up before their masters' gleaming automobiles on the street below. My neighbors included (Greek shipping magnate Aristotle) Onassis and the Batista brothers, sons of (deposed Cuban dictator) Fulgencio Batista. They would ride every weekend and they would invite me because they had heard that my family kept horses back home. I brought Fulgencio Batista Jr. and his brother once to Bacolod. Catching a whiff of molasses as we drove past the haciendas, they became nostalgic. They told me that was exactly how the air smelled where they grew up in Cuba."

Other people he met in rarefied Paris circles were members of the billionaire Bolivian tin family, the Patinos; the von Furstenburgs; Francoise Sagan, author of the international sensation, "Bonjour Tristesse," whose son Garcia took care of; and the famed novelist, playwright and poet Jean Genet.

> Edouard Lacson Garcia, jet-setting bon vivant, comes home to roost and saves his soul

Garcia points out: "In France, when they're really rich, they're aristocratic; they are not nouveaux riche, they're not businessmen. And they ain't no thieves!" He also recounts getting an inside view of the world of haute couture, including the decadent, sex-booze-drugs-and-all-that-jazz downside. "In the inner circles of Kenzo and (Yves) St. Laurent, etcetera, I looked around and thought that if I continued in this work, I'm going to kill myself, too."

Entertainer at Club Med

One gloomy day in winter, in his second year with Guy Laroche, a neighbor of his, an English novelist, visited and asked, "What are you doing here; don't you want to be out in the sun?" Garcia said of course, he would, but that he had to work. The neighbor said, "I have a friend who works in Club Med. Why don't you go see her?"

The next day, Garcia did go to see the friend, who turned out to be the directress of the boutique section of Club Med, the Paris-based resort leisure company founded by Gerard Blitz in 1950 and developed by Gilbert Trigano. He mentioned his neighbor's name and the lady asked, "Would you like to go to Marrakesh?"

Ten minutes was all it took for Garcia to end his career in fashion and haute couture. The next day, he was on a flight to Morocco. "I left my beautiful apartment and my work, and began my traveling. Thus, I discovered Africa, South America and other exotic places around the world."

Initially, he was put in charge of the boutique in Club Med Marrakesh, and then he went on from one resort to another. "I started in the boutique, went into flowers and then moved up to public relations. By the time I ended my job in Club Med in 1987, I was entertainment director for Asia. I finished in Malaysia," Garcia says.

He took a break from Club Med in 1981 to come home and open a fashion atelier with Cristina Gamboa Espinos. They thought of eventually going into ready-to-wear. While he was waiting for things to come together, an Arab prince invited him to Dubai. Ramon San Agustin, a friend of his from La Salle Bacolod, was in the prince's employ. San Agustin told the prince one day: "Let's pick up Edouard in Bacolod, bring him to Dubai and have fun!"

In Dubai, both he and San Agustin were responsible for two things: keeping the prince and organize parties for him that would attract women to his house, particularly Filipina stewardesses whom he had a special liking for. It was fun for a while, Garcia relates, but the novelty soon wore off. "We were having parties non-stop. But when I started to have dandruff in my eyebrows because of the (recycled desalinated sea) water, I said, time to go home!"

Garcia came back to Bacolod. He was restless and wanted to resume traveling. While he pondered where to go next, the phone rang one day. It was Club Med asking if he could help open a new resort in Brazil. "How can you say no to Brazil?"

So off he went again, this time to Rio de Janeiro. He stayed on with Club Med until he was sent to Malaysia, Club Med's first resort in Asia. Garcia says the Philippines was Club Med's first choice for a location in Asia, but it was difficult to negotiate with the Marcos Government. Exasperated, Club Med walked away.

By then, Garcia was entertainment director. "I'm the original Japayuki," he says of the job. "I planned and organized all-day schedules for the guests and, on occasion, sing and dance for them!" He was having such fun, and he got to spend three months of the year in Paris, a fully-paid vacation. "I was quite happy with my life that way," Garcia said. Until Sherck's words and the dire vision of getting old, shriveled and solitary in the City of Light made him shiver.

Backstabbing at the agency

Coming home yet again made Garcia more convinced about certain things-for instance, that he and Manila could never be compatible.

As soon as he was back, he was asked to join Aviacom, the ad agency that serviced the Philippine Airlines account at the time. He stayed with a friend in Malate and drove to work in Makati daily. The traffic drove him crazy and the sniping and intrigues in the advertising industry even crazier. "Ah," Garcia describes his short stint with Aviacom, "even your own creative department stabs you in the back!"

A friend of his who flew in from Paris shortly after to visit took one look at him—and around Manila—and pleaded: "Must you stay here? The people are very cruel. If you're going to work this hard, anyway, you might as well go back to Paris or Rio, or go to New York."

But Garcia stayed put. Maurice Arcache reintroduced him to Manila society–which he is not entirely enamored with. Then he toured his own country and concluded: "I love the Philippines, I love the islands! I discovered Sicogon and Boracay. I loved waking up with the sun on my face and swim in the warm waters. The water in the sea in Europe is so cold!"

One wonders about the adjustments that Garcia had to make, from a life in the fast lane abroad to the one he lives now, in laid-back Bacolod. He admits that, for a while, he missed "the beautiful people, my jet-setting friends, the contessas and the barons and the princesses; and of course the cuisine in France."

But now he knows, "I have found my place. I take care of mama. We drive driving each other mad but we love each other dearly." She is a spritely 82-year-old, still glamorous and nimble on the dance floor, and with a mind as quick as that of a woman half her age. His father, who had diabetes, passed away in 1990.

In a very real sense, Garcia came home and saved his soul. Of late he has been on a spiritual journey, which really started in France.

Fr. Bernard Ybiernas, a Carmelite monk who was his parents' friend, had brought him to the Carmelite monastery atop a hill in Roquebrune-sur-Argens, an ancient town in the south of France. Garcia was the first layman allowed to stay there. He had his own quarters and every day for two weeks, he joined the monks in early morning prayers and during meals. He remembers: "No one spoke the whole time. But the food was good."

The "whole time" he spend in meditation. He was also delighted to find a whole library of ancient tomes on religion and philosophy, which he was allowed to browse through.

"It opened my mind. I wouldn't say I was a completely changed person at the end of two weeks, but I did discover the depths of my spiritual side."

The discovery imbued him with a keener appreciation of life. It kept him grounded through his wild days in the Continent. "Even in Paris, I would go to Church on Sundays and I prayed when I had problems."

But now, he says, God is "in every moment" of his life. "It is so normal, isn't it," he muses, "for one to go back to Him, to realize that those wild hallucinations in the past were all ephemeral."

One last look at Edouard and all doubts that he is sincere vanish. The guy's for real.

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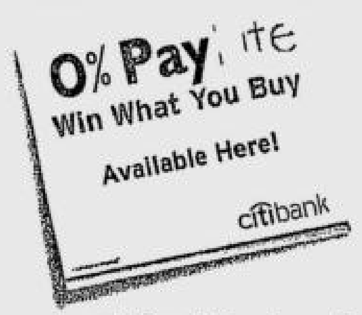

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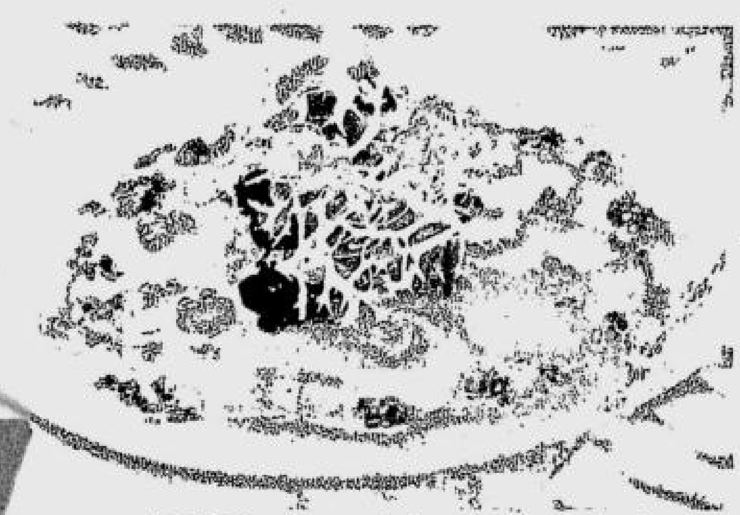
French cuisine gets a new spin

The Pen's new chef shows why Old Manila remains a favorite of the power crowd

ROAST rock lobster with mango salad, grand marnier and dried seaweed



ROSACE scallops and salmon with coriander dressing

OLD Manila at the Peninsula Manila is undergoing a conceptual menu shake-up in the hands of its new British Chef de Cuisine, Adrian Mellor. The 34-year-old chef, who has been at the helm for only three months, has introduced what he calls "Modern European" cuisine.

The new cuisine has nothing to do with the current political vocabulary in the West in which the Americans, who detest anything French, including fries, have divided the Europeans into two categories - their allies whom they call "new Europe," and those who opposed the war on Iraq whom they call "old Europe."

Food has little to do with politics, and in Chef Mellor's book, "Modern European" cuisine is "basically French in technique but with added twists to make it more flavorful, more importantly–lighter." The cuisine is not nouvelle cuisine, but it is less saucy than traditional French cooking. In Manila, this cuisine is well suited, he says, "because of the weather here, heavy food will make you feel lethargic."

Savory starters

To begin with, the chef is not entirely overhauling Old Manila's menu. He is retaining the grills - which are Old Manila's specialty and strength–but he is enlarging the menu repertoire to include culinary implementation of "Modern European" cooking.

For example, he concocted one evening what he calls "*amouche bouche* dinner" whose rough translation in English is "dinner of appetizers." It is a six-course meal, composed mainly of small servings of different dishes equivalent to the *pica-pica* or *tapas* in Spanish cooking.

The first dish is mushroom cappucinno–a soup from mushroom minced by food processor and frothy cream on top, looking like café cappucinno. The second was pan-fried *foie gras* with fresh figs and fig jus. *Foie gras* is a favorite dish in star-class hotel restaurants, but the one at Old Manila had its flavor enhanced by fresh figs and fig jus, and came in just a small morsel–enough to want you to ask for more. The third was pig trotters with morels and potato emulsion. The trotters were chopped in small cubes leaving the flavor of the pork's gelatinous skin. Then came the slow cooked filled of salmon, one inch square, crowned by dried seaweed–a rather innovative presentation of salmon.

By the time one was done with these preliminary excursions, there was enough room for the main dish –roast wood pigeon with tartlet of wild mushrooms and madeira sauce. Again, the pigeon, imported from France, was a half bird almost with a modest proportion.

Chef's creations

Champaign went well with halfway of the appetizers, but the main dish danced with the 1998 Chateau Larosey, from the estate in the heart of Haut Medoc. The wine was made of 60 percent merlot, 30 percent cabernet sauvignon, and 10 percent petit verdot.

From this presentation, one gets the point about "Modern Europe" cooking. Chef Mellor is no fan of fusion which is popular in California and in Sydney, Australia, both of which have large Asian populations. So, he does not call his concept a variant of fusion.

In this style, or discipline, as he calls it, the chef's signature dishes will include a rosace of scallops and salmon, fresh asparagus salad, coriander dressing and tomato jelly; duo of *foie gras* with sweet and sour apples, French beans and creamy walnut dressing, pan-roasted saddle of French venison, lightly pickled red cabbage, pan-roasted barramundi, *chorizo* oil and aged balsamic, and the like.

How do these ingredients translate into the menu? Before Chef Mellor took charge, Old Manila's menu was changed every six months. The menu is now more flexible. For example, parts of the "*Amouse Bouche* Dinner" may be ordered from a la carte. The chef's style is that guests are asked what they like–either in beef, chicken, pork, game or lamb.

He then tells the guests to leave it up to him, and he makes a recipe outside of the dishes listed on the menu. That's what he means by flexibility. Every week, the menu changes.

The executive business lunch menu, for example, reads like this: appetizers–seasonal melon with air-dried ham, rocket and aged parmesan, or carpaccio of tuna, salad Niçoise and walnut dressing, or homemade soup of the day.

For the main course, you choose from pan-roasted fillet salmon, herb crust fresh asparagus, chive and white wine *veloute* or grilled breast of chicken or braised lentils, and caramelized carrots or Chef's Creation (here, you have to it to the chef's creativity) If you want to stay with the traditional grills, they are still there. If you want T-bone one and a half inches thick, or tenderloin steak two inches thick, he will cook it for you.

The chef prefers US Angus steak and the only inhibitions on his recipes are the availability of ingredients and fresh stuff.

Power habitues

Chef Mellor grew up not in a gastronomic country but in Oldham, an industrial area of England. He decided to leave Oldham to pursue a culinary career. After graduating from the Thames Side Technical College in England, he moved from one restaurant to the next, receiving training under Chefs Michael Croft and Nico Ladenis, who earned three stars from Guide Michelin in London.

He moved up to Singapore where he spent three years at Qhue, a brasserie, where he said he enjoyed doing brasserie food. He was offered a job at Les Amis, considered Singapore's most internationally acclaimed restaurant. Les Amis is noted for its French menu and award-winning wine list.

"At Les Amis, I never worked with so much white truffle and caviar," he says. He eventually moved up to resident chef of Les Amis.

After two years and a half in Les Amis, the Peninsula Manila offered his the position of chef the cuisine, an opportunity he took on with enthusiasm. In Manila, he finds ample room to innovate and to work around the traditional dishes favored by long-time regulars.

As to the regulars, what do the rich and powerful guests eat at Old Manila? We learn that Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Panfilo Lacson are frequent guests. Both like seafood and Caesar salad, a favorite among Filipinos. Andres Soriano III likes steak - and red meat, washed by hefty red wine. On the other hand, Jaime Zobel de Ayala has a lean diet strong on salad. Former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile is a regular. On a recent evening, he came with his children. He likes steaks, and he wants them well done.

HOUSE ARREST

By Ana A.S. Bitong, *Contributor*

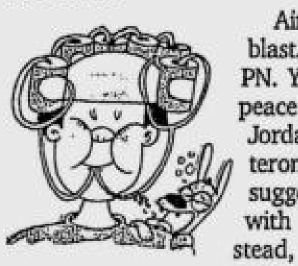
ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEPH BRAVO

What to do when going out is not advisable? Here are 10 ways to sizzle far from the usual sparks

A DEADLY virus, bomb attacks, bizarre safety checks (poking inside your bag with a stick!) are making going out a real headache these days. Let's not even talk about the intense heat. What to do when getting away is not advisable? Home sweet home.

Here are 10 ways to sizzle on your own:

The Man

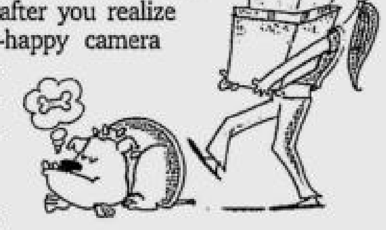


Air conditioner in full blast. A cold six-pack and ESPN. You can finally watch in peace those reruns of Michael Jordan's games. If testosterone level is high, I would suggest reruns of "Baywatch" with Pamela Anderson instead, or an edition of Pulp magazine. Or maybe you can work out in the nude and admire your own biceps. You may also want to read "Seabiscuit: Three Men & a Horse" by Laura Hillenbrand, a passionate historical sports book and winner of the William Hill sport's book of the year award, available at Power Books. If you want something really inspiring, there's director Yi Mou Zhang's "Hero." It will blow ... your mind.

The Woman

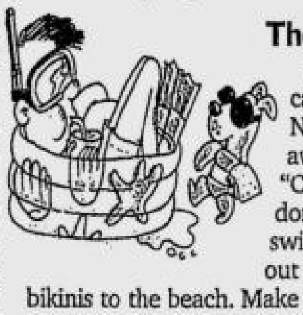
Turn your home into a spa. First, scrub your body with African salt scrub then wash it off using a bath and shower cream. Then give yourself a facial with seaweed, jojoba or aloe vera, depending on your skin type. Finish with a masque in blue corn, honey, evening primrose or black currant while your feet are soaked in peppermint or lemongrass bath (all available at Body Shop). Slip into a pair of pajamas (a local brand, Hilik, makes pj's that are both comfy and trendy). Open a bottle of Chardonnay from Terry's Selection or Santi's Deli, and top it off with a feel-good movie like "Bridget Jones' Diary" or "Sweet Home Alabama." If we are in the book mood I recommend, for those whose prime was in the Eighties, "Time After Time" by Sue Haasler; for the power woman, definitely "Tall Poppies" by Louise Bagshawe; and for the working mother, "I Don't Know How She Does It" by Allison Pearson.

The Lady



Now is the time to take out all those pictures and put them in nice, earth-friendly and artistic albums like those from the paper shop Karton. Write your quotes and take a trip down memory lane. Believe me, a whole weekend might not even be enough. Resist the urge to just shove them in a box after you realize what a trigger-happy camera monster you've been, taking pictures of who-knows-who who-knows-where, doing who knows what. Or try making cold soup, perfect for hot weather–pumpkin and tomato are my favorites.

The Beach Bum

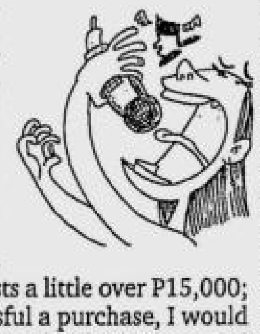


Bummed out that you can't go to Boracay? Play Norah Jones' Grammy-award winning album, "Come Away with Me," and don your latest swimwear–it's 100 degrees out there, no reason to restrict bikinis to the beach. Make frozen margaritas; all you need are triple sec, tequila, lime juice, and ice. Remember to spray some Evian on your face every now and then for that wet sensation. After you've had enough of Norah, sit back and watch Blue Crush (available in VCD & DVD).

The Partygoer

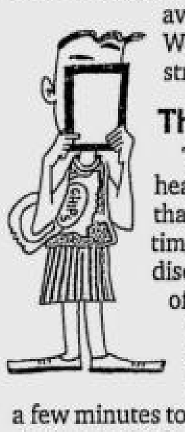
Lay out all outfits, mix and match, and surprise! Since you're not pressed for time because well, you're not really going out, I guarantee you'll come up with at least two new outfits to wear when you can finally paint the town red. Make sure all cooling devices are running while you're doing this; it could get quite strenuous. Copy that eye make-up trick you saw in Vogue but haven't tried for fear of looking like a "dogue." Play this hot CD hand-picked by resident OLIVE deejay and part owner Nicky Jurado–"Back to Mine" series by Nick Warren, or the "The Night is Young" compilation. Eat a bar of chocolate, get your high, dance it off before heading for never-never land. Or if you just can't give your social skills a rest, go online and chat 'til you drop with "clubbers" around the world.

The Stressed-Out



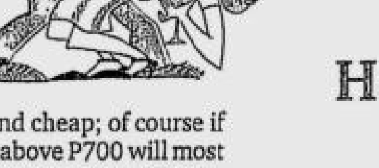
A favorite Japanese past time known as the karaoke is proving to be the latest thing for the highly stressed. It can program as much as 7,765 songs in one single microphone aptly called the MAJIC MIC! Sing your worries away with "I Will Survive" in several languages. Shake yourself another "Kamikaze!" or, if you really want to be authentic, try cold Sake. This little wonder of a microphone costs a little over P15,000; if this proves to be too stressful a purchase, I would suggest locking yourself in the bathroom and screaming your lungs out for oh, five minutes or so. After which, come out and play this old (but still available) album, "The Wonderful World of Ella Fitzgerald & Louie Armstrong."

The Jaded



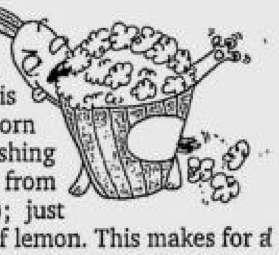
Tired of reading, watching, and hearing bad news? Here's something that will help you appreciate our times: "I Claudius," a BBC movie–five-disc DVD collection–tracing the lives of several Roman Emperors. It is wonderfully written and superbly acted. Direction and cinematography are dated although it will take a few minutes to get used to the BBC approach. The characters in the film, including children, lie, steal, and kill each other's mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter ... By the second disc you are going to be hooked! By the last disc you will be frozen in fear, terror, and shock, and thankful that you were born in this century.

The Couple



Buy a nice bottle of red wine because ... well, red is said to be an aphrodisiac. The French brand Dulong from Terry's Selection is nice and cheap; of course if you've got the dough anything above P700 will most probably be good. Chill it (room temperature in Europe is not the same in the Philippines). Serve some nice blue cheese like Roquefort or Manchego. Play good old Frankie, light the candles, a little slow dance, watch "Casablanca."

The Family



Quarantine the whole family with a night of board games like Monopoly, Pictionary and Cluedo. If these games seem obsolete to your kids, try Hobbes at Greenbelt; it has new editions for Generation X, like Star Wars. My favorite is Family Feud. Pop some corn and make some refreshing lemonade (the instant kind from PriceSmart is my choice); just garnish with a fresh slice of lemon. This makes for a nice bonding evening, provided the mood doesn't get too competitive. In which case, take time out with a slice of keylime pie from Blue Kitchen or home-made turtle pie, which you can order from the Yulos' kitchen in Forbes Park.

The Barkada

Order pizza and turn off all the lights. Watch "The Ring" (English or Japanese, it won't matter) and have someone call the landline. Guaranteed to make everyone scream.

The Philippines, third quarter 2003

By Georgina C. Solina
Contributor

> The planets indicate the presence of a higher frequency in the land, symbolic of a state of grace

- **Obstacles may came in the way of our goals. The way to overcome them is through prayer and positive thinking.**
- **The Philippines will not be as heavily affected by SARS as other countries; however, foreign business prospects might be hampered.**
- **Life will be characterized by more sensuality, revealed by some deviation in conduct. As though current confusions in gender identity were not enough, expect even more.**
- **Be more cautious in relationships, especially in money matters because they will bring about changes, good or bad. There is a connection between finances and feelings. If you have marriage plans, some financial calculations are involved.**

THIS is the general forecast for the Philippines, from June to August.

The Solar Return Chart or annual horoscope is based on the Sun sign or on the June 12 "birthday" of the Philippines. In 2003, the date falls on the ruling sign or Annual Ascendant in Taurus (work, success). This indicates professional or job problems and difficulties. Because it usually involves duties and obligations or even servitude in the 6th house of service, employment and health are highlighted in this case.

Mars (the planet of action) and Neptune (the planet of mystics and illusion) in the 10th house of career, indicate professional annoyances and difficulties and a spirit of servitude that sometimes ends in martyrdom.

Lately, Filipino health workers in Canada, Singapore, and elsewhere have reaped high grades selfless service amid the onslaught of SARS. Filipino domestics and caregivers have exposed themselves to the risks of contamination so that others may live. Yet those in Hong Kong have been forced to take a pay cut.

Good karma

There is a bad omen for health in the 2003 Solar Return chart, but the Grim Reaper's indicator is surprisingly absent in the 6th house of health. Instead there is the Part of Fortune which stands for divine protection, worldly success or heavy financial returns not within the natives' control. Through generosity and selfless service, Filipinos attract good things that are necessary for happiness, spelled out as good karma.

In other words, purity attracts fortune. Venus (the planet of relationships and beauty) conjunct North Node (the symbol of groups and destiny) augurs well for the people's resistance to SARS, and generally indicate the presence of a higher frequency in the land symbolic of a state of grace.

However, an indication of domestic troubles for married couples will arise due to a clash of mindsets between male and female. Moon (emotions) in Libra (the sign of balance and partnerships) is favorable for social and intimate relations, but it could be compromised by unbalanced emotional control. Danger of separation or disorder in marriage, or collaborations in business is indicated. Nonetheless, the Moon in the sector of marriage and partnerships shows that help will come from women, as usual.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEPH BRAVO

From July to August, Nature will be benign to the country. Moderate weather will continue to bring profitable agricultural production, although there could be earthquakes and mining or maritime disasters, particularly in September. The life-threatening presence of Lilith, the dark moon, on the annual ascendant which stands for the physical body and personality, is unfavorable.

Long travel and dreams or aggressive plans for business expansions may be hampered or entirely blocked, or encounter a lot of problems due to ill health and other limiting circumstances. Instead of masculine drive and aggressiveness in a person, feminine intuition, compassion, kindness and fairness will be energized to advance human concerns.

Risks in carelessness

Women are generally favored in business. They will be the leaders in re-ordering social and economic conditions. Venus' prominent position increases their optimism and sociability. Venus promises worldly success for the people, something that may not come in a steady flow because Mars in the sector of career shows professional annoyances and difficulties. Psychologically, it predisposes people to risks and even dangerous actions, or to a certain carelessness in business.

Conjugal life is sown with discord, indicating a need for spirituality to develop within the relationship. There will be complications and problems involving legal proceedings, contracts, and business partnerships or married life. Sometimes the partner's health is weakened, or disloyal actions and intrigues will come to the fore.

The Sun's position for June 2003 to June 2004 seems to clarify earnings for the country, making them come more easily. One is warned not to have vain or exaggerated hopes of increasing fortune. Saturn in the sector of money rules foreign jobs and indicates worries about money or delays in returns. Further, it creates difficulties in financial plans for overseas work. However, the yearend will be better than the beginning as Jupiter, symbol of divine benevolence, promises a good event or hopes that depend on productivity of harvests or inheritance.

Publishing boon

The period will be a busy time in literary and publishing circles. Publishing will be a lucrative sector. Restiveness is indicated in the transportation sector as it proposes matters that will require Congressional action.

There will be disputes with foreign powers on a number of issues involving free trade and the airline industry. Efforts will be exerted to deal with foreign debts. Business output and productivity will be highly stimulated, particularly those related to the rebuilding of post-Saddam Iraq. The military will score several victories against insurgents.

Meanwhile, scandals will abound and continue to surface among the elite, including the religious and legal circles.

There's a cosmic force in the sector of philosophy and higher studies in the country's Solar Return chart. It suggests ways to ward off SARS and other plagues of unprecedented dimension. A healthy and happy mind will keep the immune system strong and therefore help maintain a healthy body.

The presence of Chiron (healing planet) in the sector of the higher mind indicates that Filipinos are naturally interested in philosophy and spirituality. Self-growth or self-help is a natural outcome of such an interest. The challenge is how to apply spirituality in daily life.

Mercury (communication and intellect) conjunct North Node indicates that a certain breed of Filipino intellectuals is now emerging, who will illustrate how it is possible to be in this world and yet not of it. They will be an effective force in bringing important Aquarian concepts into acceptance.

For questions or feedback write to solhaus@mindgate.net

The genesis of 'chic' . . .

From page C1

Our obsession with comparing ourselves to others and emulating them diverts us from our real goals in life, which have little to do with "Chic."

I often get into passionate discussions with friends about how we sometimes have to go against the tide to retain our wits. Our talks would hit a dead end when they say we cannot possibly prevail over images that illustrate how 25 is the last permissible number in terms of a woman's age and waistline, and that for men, it is 30. We have no choice but to comply to these standards, they say, making us certified victims of social dictates.

Why do we let ourselves be enslaved by norms that ultimately make us insecure? Scientists have surmised that in the early days of mankind, cooperation was a potent tool for survival, and so man flourished by being submissive to, or influenced by, social pressure. We have evolved into a species of conformists easily exploited by slick marketeers.

I brought up this subject of social pressure and conformity with life strategist **Denise Lawrence**, when she visited Manila recently. Asked why only a few dared to be different, she replied: "People who work hard at living according to their personal values are often considered arrogant. But so what if others think you are arrogant? Embrace the tiger, as they say. Eventually you will find your power, and you will become a very big force to reckon with."

Desiderata redux

Speaking of marketing, our friend Luxasia, a fragrances and cosmetics distributor, requested a pictorial on its newest fragrance, which alludes to the pursuit of well-being and body-mind integration. Its selling point is this rare ingredient from China that claims revitalizing properties.

We explained to Luxasia that Elan readers, who are also the target consumers, belonged to that same breed that had long suffered information overload. Bombarded daily with talk and images of the latest vanities, chances are they've become desensitized. Thus, we said, it was pointless to wax lyrical about top and bottom notes, unless the readers had the scent right in front of them, to get the drift.

We advised our friends that advertisers would do consumers a big favor by hawking positive thoughts instead of products. Consumers would not feel they are imposed upon, resulting in trust. After all, since fragrances claim they make the wearer feel good, shouldn't the message do the same?

Because it is verily a New Age of fragrance, art director **Antonio Salac Santos** conceived the shoot of a man and a woman (touting the bottle) going placidly amidst the noise and haste of Plaza Sta. Cruz. Santos chose **Jun de Leon** because of their long-time association. This pictorial is less about exhibiting bravura, like his previous fashion and sports shoot, than challenging traditional expectations of fashion photography.

Since this product is marketed as a uni-scent (as in unisex), it was not entirely coincidental that the models depict the 21st century standard for New Androgyny–strong features for the female and soft features for the male. We made a big joke about who was prettier (handsomer?) between model-turned-thespian **Lara Fabregas** and Cal Carrie's **Enrique Soler.**

The most fun thing about this shoot was conversing with the models between takes. Fabregas has beautifully survived her much hyped-up split from actor **Raymond Bagatsing.** Theirs was a whirlwind courtship that led to a marriage of 18 months. Their story is as old as the hills: You fall in love with the idealized persona until reality sets in. Fabregas will take a breather in London next month to hone her thespic skills.

Soler has been getting offers to model abroad, since many markets now favor the Pan-Asian type. While waiting for the SARS scare to die down, he does commercials and appears in a techno-TV show on Channel 23. His day job as lawyer at PLDT seems more like a sideline.

Showtime on print

Leovino Garcia, Dean of the Humanities Center in Ateneo received three dozen text messages and letters from former students, including columnist **Augusto Villalon** (his student in 1965). His think piece, "On Being Cultured," published last May 10, focused on the relevance of arts and culture to our lives. His essay may seem esoteric by the standards of gossip-happy Filipinos. But this kind of response only goes to show that either readers' sensibilities are becoming more refined, or there's a market for think-pieces that has yet to be tapped. People are craving new ideas to feed their minds with. Garcia's story obviously challenged the traditional paradigm that news must quench our insatiable desire to be titillated.

For this issue, we asked Professor Garcia to interpret **Steven Kline's** controversial pictorial of **Madonna** that merited 44 pages in the April issue of W magazine. In his analysis, the writer points out cultural symbols in the provocative shoot that he likens to an electrifying stage performance. His article augurs well with the book review on "Fashion Victim" and the theme of this essay: To h___ with what others think; just be yourself and get on with it.

Email the author at lgarcia@ateneo.edu.

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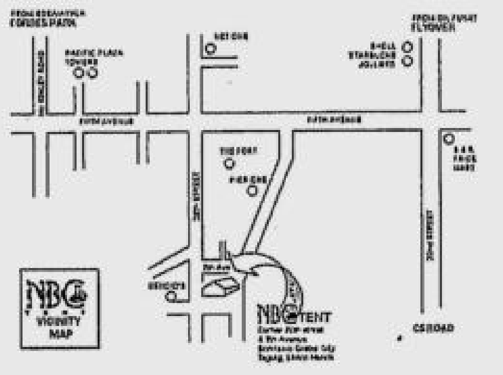

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Text by Dadi Janki, "Companion of God"
Photos by Jun de Leon
Pictorial direction by Antonio Salac Santos

MODELS: LARA FABREGAS, ENRIQUE SOLER (CAL CARRIE'S INT'L)
HAIR: MOJO OF VIVERE SALON, SUNRISE TERRACES, PEREA ST. LEGAZPI VILLAGE, MAKATI
MAKEUP: ROLLY ADUCA FOR SHISEIDO, GLORIETTA 4
FRAGRANCE: BVLGARI WHITE TEA
CLOTHES: FAÇCONABLE, ZEGNA SPORT, RUSTAN'S MAKATI

But aren't we all fashion victims?

Fashion Victim
OUR LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH DRESSING, SHOPPING, AND THE COST OF STYLE
Michelle Lee

BOOK REVIEW

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

Fashion Victim
By: Michelle Lee
Broadway books, 2003, 285 pages

WE are all fashion victims in varying degrees–from the secretary outfitted in fake Christian Dior tee with "J'adore Dior" splashed across her chest, dangerously low-rise jeans from Levi's, and open-toed Janilyn shoes; to the well-traveled socialite in Earl Jeans, austere Prada top, and JP Tods alligator driving shoes.

Taste is relative after all, and the bottom line is: we are all unwitting slaves to trends.

Michelle Lee, an editor who has worked with such magazines as Glamour and Mademoiselle, scrutinizes the world of fashion and its effect on consumers in her engrossing and informative book, "Fashion Victim." It covers everything–from shopaholics and sweatshops, to celebrities and the "conspiracy" to propagate trends.

Fuel of fashion

Lee argues that trends are the fuel of fashion and that, with the Internet and other forms of mass media, including movies and television, the "hamster wheel of style," as she calls it, moves so fast that consumers simply can't keep up.

Many years ago, she observes, it took months for runway collections to be seen by the general public. Nowadays, we can view the clothes at the same time as some A-list editor in the front row. Magazines proclaiming "what's hot and what's not" make whole wardrobes obsolete in a matter of weeks. This is why we often find ourselves standing in front of a closetful of clothes and lamenting we have nothing to wear.

Makeovers in syndicated television shows like Oprah also send the message that clothes can somehow magically transform a person. This has all but obliterated any smidgen of individualism left in ... anyone. We think we are being stylish by keeping up with trends, when this mindless conformity just makes us look like everyone else.

Celeb endorsers

Lee makes a point when she discusses the big influence media and celebrities have on us. Take the groundbreaking HBO series "Sex and The City." No other show in the history of television has inspired as many trends as it has. The show has made Manolo Blahnik a household name even in households where the total combined monthly income is equivalent to the cost of one pair of his hand-made shoes.

Even the music industry, once regarded as the grungy counterpart of the film industry, has embraced designer fashion. Hip-hop artist Ja Rule often wears Burberry in his videos, so now the ubiquitous Burberry plaid is considered hip. Not bad for a brand that used to be associated with old and uptight Englishmen.

And the fashion industry is savvy to this. Every designer knows that when a celebrity wears his creation to something like the Academy awards, billions of people around the world are bound to see it. He can be sure that when Gwyneth Paltrow sits in the front row of his fashion show, her photograph will appear in an issue of People magazine that will read even in some Third World country.

Thus, designers shower celebrities–and their stylists–with expensive clothes. What happens then is that these celebrities touted as "stylish" or "best-dressed" by all fashion magazines are actually walking "billboards" stripped of their individual styles.

Lee also talks about how fashion influences aesthetic ideals like, say, the acceptable body type. Clothing manufacturers have manipulated sizings to give the consumer the psychological boost she needs. There was a time when the smallest size for ladies (American) apparel was 4. Now sizing goes all the way down to 0, so that someone who used to be an 8 can now fit into a 4. When we feel good about our bodies, we tend to buy more clothes.

There are so many absorbing insights in "Fashion Victim," from the serious (sweatshops and the ecology), to the hilarious (among the "Fashion Victims' Ten Commandments" is: "Thou shalt pay more to appear poor"). Lee makes us see that even the most "fashionable" among us are really not as "style-ish" as we think. More often than not, long before we reach the mall, our clothing decisions have been made for us.

The advent of what Lee refers to as "McFashion" has even produced a homogenous style of clothing that stores like The Gap and Banana Republic serve up. These retailers offer us the comfort of going to a store where basic acceptable clothes that match are available. It is just a mater of deciding to what "type" or "group" we fall under. Am I a hip? Sophisticated? Funky? Then we find the designers or brands that feed the image.

What I think

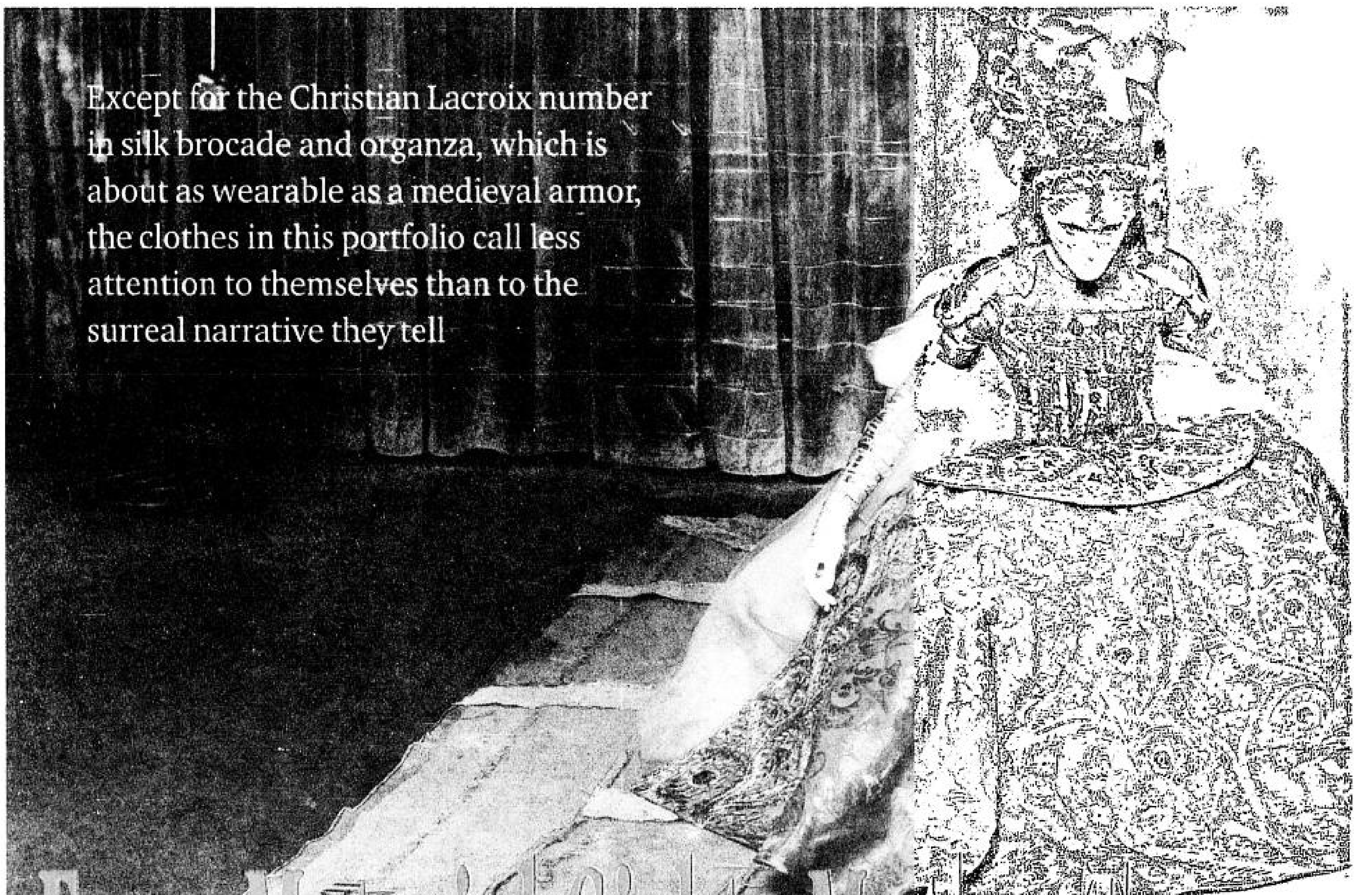
As I contemplate the trend phenomenon, one specific local fad comes to mind. I call it "The Mystery of the Polo Bag." I can never step out of the house without running into at least five of these checkered things. They come in green, beige, and black and white and, like cheesy Air Supply songs, have been around for the last 10 years! They are sold everywhere, from Landmark to Greenhills, and they're not that cheap, either.

Funny thing is, I have never seen the likes of that bag in any Ralph Lauren store in North America. And yet here they persevere. Why won't they die? They're not even vintage in the way a '70s Gucci bag would be. There are so many excellent local brands with better design and quality–for example, Carbon–and yet Filipinas cannot end their love affair with the generic checks! Where do they come from? What is the driving force behind their staying power?

So I digress. But reading "Fashion Victim" has made me a little introspective. Doubtless, a lot of weight is still put on "status symbols," and more often than not, people latch on to a trend because they think it will elevate their status somewhat. Case in point is the popularity of Charriol bracelets in this country.

For sure, Filipinos have become more fashion-conscious in the last decade. Affordable trendy brands like Mango and Top Shop, as well as good quality local brands like Kamiseta, have made it possible for us to keep up with the latest styles without boring holes into our pockets. Even so, I applaud true individuals who maintain a sense of personal style. Having said that, like an addict who needs her fix, I cannot wait to read the latest issue of Vogue.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com


Except for the Christian Lacroix number in silk brocade and organza, which is about as wearable as a medieval armor, the clothes in this portfolio call less attention to themselves than to the surreal narrative they tell

From Material Girl to Mother Teresa

By Leovino Ma. Garcia, *Contributor*

WHAT'S this? Madonna sounds almost like an Ateneo graduate, proclaiming that her "real responsibility" is "to bring light to the world and make (it) a better place!" Has she, perhaps, been reading Emmanuel Levinas?

No longer the Material Girl spouting obscenities for public consumption, Madonna seems to have reinvented herself yet again. In an interview with Merle Ginsberg, she comes across as a "New Age Mother Teresa" who feels deeply convinced that "everything comes to you for a reason." Could this be the result of immersion in Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) studies and Ashtanga yoga, and a strict macrobiotic diet?

Whatever, as Chitang Nakpil would say.

We're really more concerned here with interpreting Steven Klein's 44-page portfolio–"Madonna" in the April issue of W. Instead of a boring fashion spread, Klein treats us to a moveable and mobile feast. Indeed, something happens as we turn the pages of this glossy magazine. Sparks of creative energy fly off in all directions. A performance, an "event" is taking place. With all her hyperextensions and contortions, Madonna makes a powerful statement vis-a-vis fashion, all of one piece with her recent "American Life" video where, as "a fatigue-clad glam superhero," she "tosses a grenade onto a fashion runway."

More than meets the eye

Klein and Madonna connive to dare us–to see more than what is apparent. Isn't that what photography as art should be? The two put into question, or "deconstruct," certain assumptions about fashion photography. Klein and Madonna behave like rebels "who think outside the box." For Klein, fashion photography does not deal with models airbrushed to bloodless perfection. Certainly, it has nothing to do with severe stares of condescension, or aching glances of desire, or pearly smiles of pretended innocence. It has nothing to do with the effortlessly calculated gait.

Madonna best expresses this revolution in attitude: "I can enjoy fashion–sometimes. Some of my very good friends are designers. Jean Paul Gaultier is a real artist. And I can see the beauty and the art that is involved with costume and design. I totally respect it. But with everything going on in the world right now, I just feel we are too preoccupied with the wrong things. I'm just not that interested anymore in fashion per se. It used to mean something a little more special. Now, actresses look like models and models become actresses. Yuck. Who has any individuality? It's so boring."

If anything, Madonna as rendered by Klein looks fierce, threatening, unattractive, to say the least, in her writhing poses. The photographs don't look like they were meant to please, anyway. But they are certainly provocative. They provoke, the way a Francis Bacon (the painter, not the thinker, if you don't mind) work provokes. They whet the appetite, give food for thought, and fuel the imagination.

'Surreal narrative'

The fashion shoot tells a story. It is "a surreal narrative about an artist creating a performance." The narrative begins with a slouching woman, looking caged in Oriental splendor; continues with a fierce-looking dog on a leash (the type Ang Kiukok committed to his canvasses three decades ago); then a muzzled "gladiator" on all fours; a beautiful white gown being consumed by flames; a pliant circus acrobat on a table; a go-go dancer gyrating around a pole; close-up of a woman's eyes, very Asian; a brooding Lolita curled up on a dirty mattress; again the woman in Oriental splendor, now with her brocade gown fully displayed; a pallid puppet; a blonde bombshell; a Cabaret entertainer clambering up a pole; a rock star preparing for a concert; a yogi in stiletto heels on a table; close-up of the muzzled "gladiator" on all fours, working on a bar; detail of the woman's eye. It ends with the white gown hissing ... going up in smoke. What narrative can this be? We just have to figure that out.

Be yourself

Except for the Christian Lacroix couture gown in silk brocade and organza, which is about as wearable as a medieval armor, the clothes featured in this portfolio do not call attention to themselves. One is flabbergasted to find out in the end that they carry the brand names Prada, Dolce & Gabbana, Yves St. Laurent and other power brands that most people love to impress others with. But it is Madonna who truly impresses us by her refusal to strike predictable stances. Her lack of pretense, her courage to remain herself, and her nonchalance are stunning. She looks secure in the conviction that fashion really is about the inessential, the constantly changing. To transform the inessential into the essential by becoming a slave to it, is to miss the whole point about being fashionable. Being fashionable is about being only yourself (an "only" that is not a regret but a joy). It is being confident, rejoicing in your uniqueness, thankful that you are irreplaceable.

Being fashionable is serious business. But it is the kind of serious business that is "not to be taken too seriously," to paraphrase G.K. Chesterton on life.

It could be Madonna's "responsibility" to help "others," especially the young, to help them discern the essential from the inessential. Not a bad lesson, that!

Email the author at lgarcia@ateneo.edu.

Work out, don't just work up a sweat

By Cherish Garcia Hernandez
Contributor

A WHOLE new crop of mega gyms have mushroomed all over Metro Manila lately.

Many years ago when I still lived in Alabang, I worked out in a modest but excellent gym run by Tina Juan, one of the leading fitness gurus in the country today. At that time bigger gyms with many branches seemed inferior to Tina's place because they could not match the expertise with which planned the classes and trained her staff.

Most gyms would hire freelance instructors who gave unstructured classes with no rhyme or reason, very often just working up their students to a high impact sweat, with little regard for their safety and individual fitness levels.

Having been a professional ballet dancer and teacher, Tina constantly put as much emphasis on form as on proper technique.

When I moved to Makati last year, the new crop of gyms from abroad were just starting to open. I chose Fitness First at the Robinson Summit Center because I found it extremely affordable, considering its facilities–state-of-the-art equipment in a huge, comfortable space, and a variety of classes throughout the day. The monthly fee allowed me to work out as much as I wanted, and take as many classes as I wished. Further, my "passport" allowed me to work out as well in other branches here and abroad.

Cosmic cycling

One of the first classes I tried was cosmic cycling. They have a cycling room with many stationary bikes. The class starts with a cycling routine, for about an hour. The instructor then takes the class on a virtual ride, telling them when "go" uphill, turn left or right, or go faster. With the help of a few easy adjustments in the custom-made bikes, the class is soon working up a sweat.

This is extremely challenging, and not for the faint of heart! The music is great and, with the right motivation from an enthusiastic instructor, it is a great class guaranteed to melt excess poundage and result in the most amazingly toned legs.

Also unique to Fitness First are the Body Balance, Body Pump, and most recently, Body Combat classes. Choreographed abroad by Les Mills International, these are structured workouts with specific training effects and which meet different needs in terms of pace and intensity.

Body Pump is a weight training workout that strengthens, tones, and defines every muscle group in the body. It is a non-impact resistance program using barbells and adjustable weights, a welcome alternative to working out on the machines. Recently introduced, Body Combat combines self-defense disciplines like karate, tai chi, kick-boxing, and tae kwondo into a fending-fighting routine set to music. Body Balance, my favorite, is a mind/body workout. It is a mixture of yoga, tai chi, Pilates and Feldenkrais (awareness through movement technique). Body Balance involves moving to music through a series of stretches and poses. It is very low-impact but can be quite intense. At the end of the class I feel relaxed and renewed. I'm looking forward to Body Jam, a dance workout that will be introduced soon.

Muscle memory

Fitness First is the only gym in the country to offer the Les Mills classes. Instructors go through special training, the "tracks" are changed every two or three months, and then launched with a lot of fanfare. I particularly like this system, for three reasons:

One is that I'm a firm believer that muscle memory is required to perform certain exercises well. Second, the class is a well-thought of routine, so one is assured there is a sense of purpose rather than just flailing about trying to sweat. Lastly, I have to say that the combination of up-to-date music with interesting movements is a lot of fun–I'm always challenged, never bored.

The variety factor is also a plus. For maximum performance, the body needs to be constantly jolted. So I enjoy a nice aerobic workout on a Monday with Body Combat, stretch on Wednesdays with Body Balance, and get the equivalent of weight training on Fridays with Body Pump. I have noticed a big positive change in my body and fitness level, something I'm obsessed with because I love to eat.

Another big factor is the instructors. They are great motivators, and manage to keep the class interested. Eric (Body Balance) and Kaye (Body Pump & Body Combat) are really good.

Bottom line

Other exciting classes that I have tried include: Step, which I used to avoid, but now religiously attend High-Low, which I really like but can't seem to catch schedule-wise; and Cardio Funk, super-fun but also super-full all the time.

Bottom line: find a gym that suits your needs, and don't be afraid to be picky–after all, you're paying. Listen to your body and don't hesitate to complain when you feel extreme aches and pains. You don't have to be out of breath to achieve maximum results, and Jane Fonda's "feel the burn" days are truly over. Workout classes should be something you look forward to and enjoy. When you find something you're comfortable with, you will be more inclined to make it a lifestyle and stay fit.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

FITNESS FIRST IS LOCATED AT ROBINSON SUMMIT CENTER, MAKATI, TEL NO. 813-0761; EASTWOOD CITY, LIBIS, 421-4220; ALABANG, 772-4356 AND ABS-CBN, 413-0888.

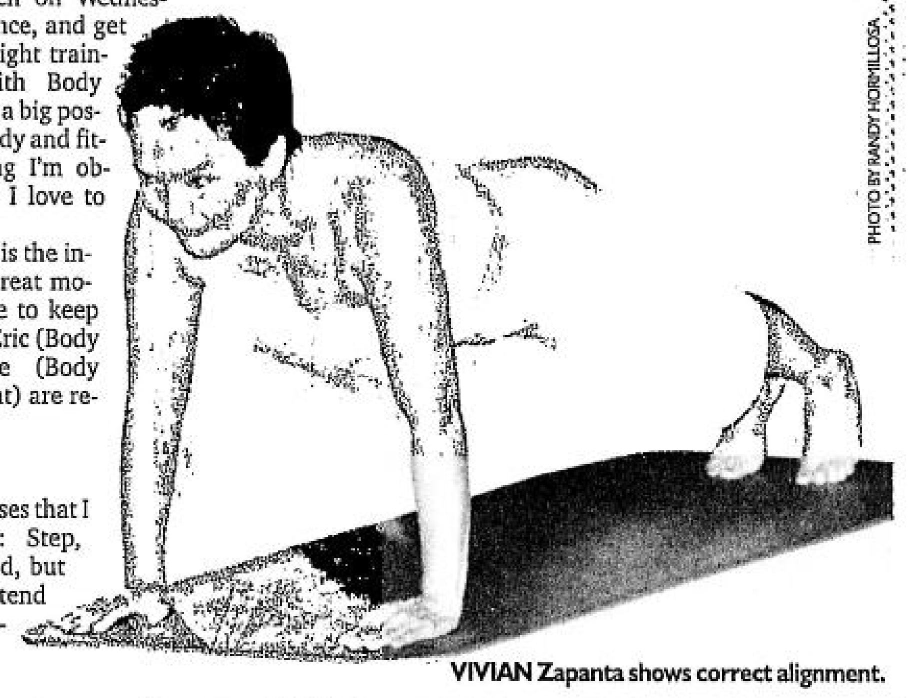


PHOTO BY RANDY HORMILLOSA

VIVIAN Zapanta shows correct alignment.

Art and logic in the realm of the spirit

FEEDBACK

I WAS browsing through the Philippine Daily Inquirer this morning when I came across an article ("On Being Cultured" by Leovino Garcia, May 10) which I knew at a glance would make an inspiring read. Three paragraphs into the essay, I was proven right–it was the perfect article to start my Saturday morning with.

When Impy Pilapil's glass sculpture caught my eye, and I was transfixed. It was definitely a good visual metaphor for your discussion of "the intimacy between the material and the spiritual". The ripples of glass invited the reader to a moment of calm and sweet abandon reminiscent of a maternal embrace which I think can only be surpassed by the ecstasy in the "Thou" that I first learned about while sitting in one of Dr. Garcia's Philosophy of Religion classes in Ateneo.

Man does have a tendency to allude to the feminine when all-pervasive life-giving beauty is perceived. This of course reminds me of the philosophies of Ricoeur and Levinas. When art inspires us to think, feel, and act beyond our self-centered animal tendencies, art draws us towards Infinity.

When I was a little girl in the early 1980's, my mother would bring me to Impy Pilapil's place near Manila Bay. She was into a lot of paper sculpture back then. I believe her switch to a more visually ephemeral medium helped her express with greater freedom her unique artistic experience. Her art now is more fluid, apparently effortless, less theoretical and more immediately palpable. It seems so organic, so alive–being sensual and spiritual at once. One day, when I have the means, I would like to own one of her pieces.

I pondered the words–"To be cultured is not to be set apart from others. It is to be connected, bound to other people in the solidarity of what is human"–and could not help contemplating culture as a kind of womb where the spiritual embryo of a human group is nurtured into a self-conscious social entity, able to speak its own language, sport its own name, and share with others its own stories. "To be human is to be constantly aware that matter is the necessary slope of the spirit."

But I think the ultimate breakthrough in the emergence of a unique social entity is when intentionality steps in. Cultural self-awareness is not enough. The enjoyment of cultural activities is not enough. Group ecstasy in shared cultural activities is not enough. The perpetuation of cultural activities is not enough.

Cultural intentionality leads man out of the comfort zone of cultural inherence, and into the meta-cognitive realization that human culture is just the temporal and material womb that sustains man's psychic life. Call me idealistic, but I believe that for all the beauty and grandeur of human culture, it would be a great loss to man if he fails to realize that all art and science subscribes to logic that is inherent in the realm of the spirit.

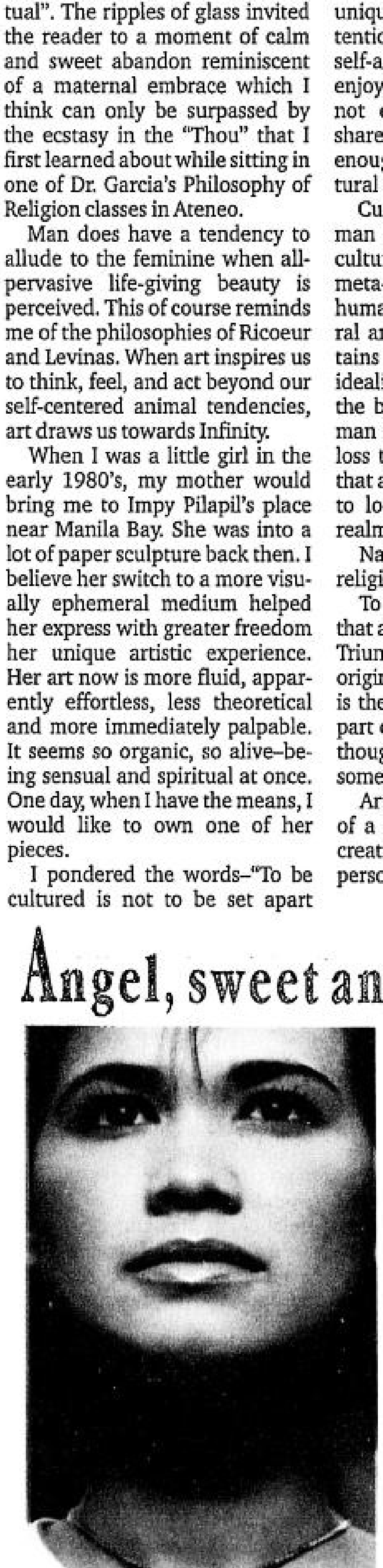
Naturally, I am talking about religion.

To put it more boldly, I believe that all true art follows the way of Triune Being. Art, albeit of human origin but all the more because it is the work of human persons, is part of the cosmic resonance: "Although I am immersed in matter, I somehow transcend it."

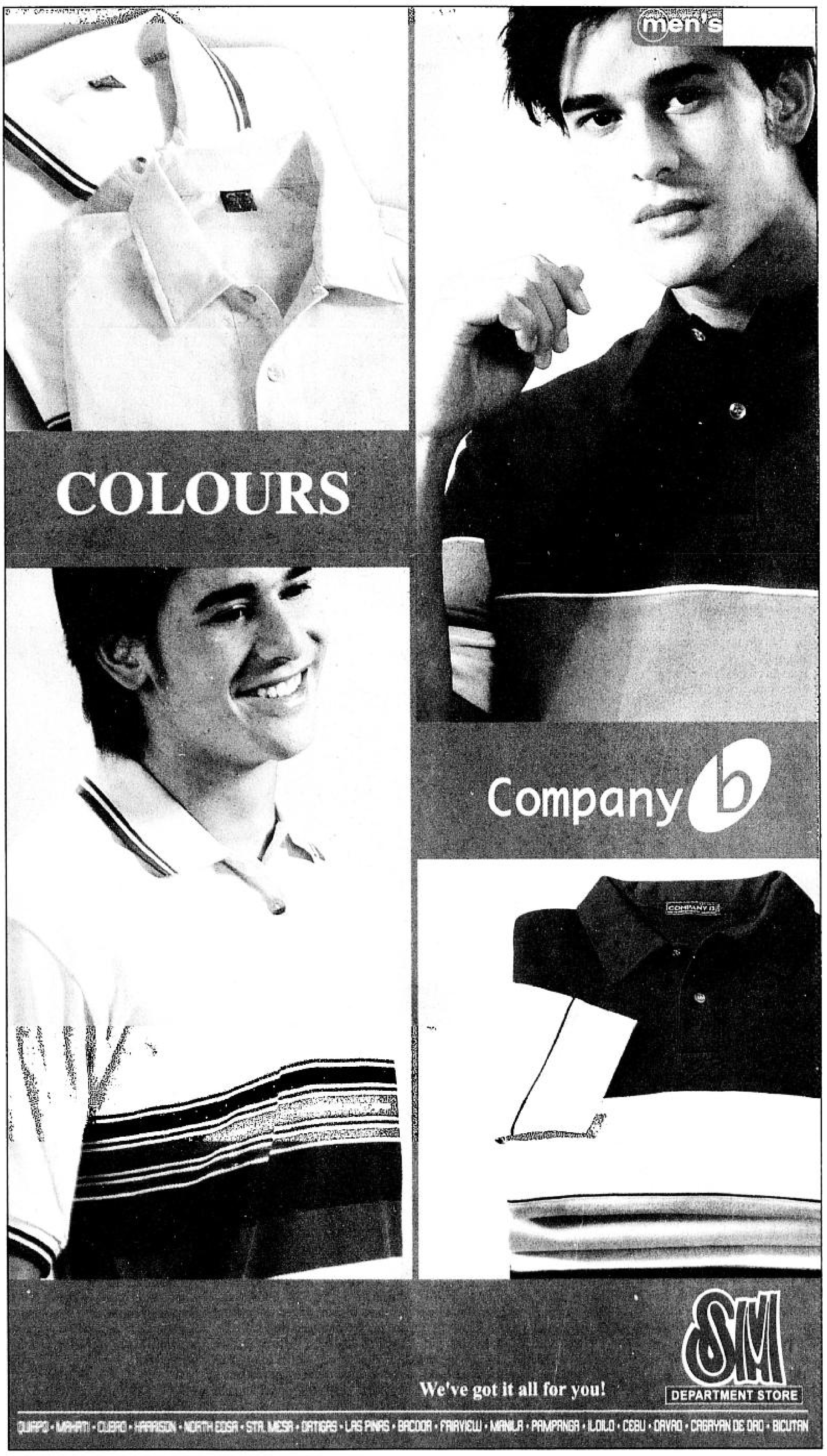
Art is not the sterile imitation of a masterwork; it is the ever-creative expression of a unique personal experience.

Therese Marbella

Angel, sweet and sensual!



"AN angel lives within every woman, sweet yet playful, innocent yet bold, fresh yet elegant." This is the theme of Shiseido's summer collection. Lara Fabregas is made up to look like a 21st-century angel who descends on earth. Her face is made ethereal by a new colorless-finish foundation called the "Veil" which contains three times the absorptive capacity of conventional powders, and provides a smooth finish on uneven skin surface. Orange eye makeup and translucent lips are the focal points. Shimmering white eye shadow highlights the black-line eyes to project a trendy and sensual image.



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CHAPLIN. Cinematic legend.

SATURDAY *Special*

Charlie Chaplin and his funny walk are back in the movie limelight

CANNES, France—Charlie Chaplin and his funny walk are back in the limelight with a new restored version of his last "silent" movie, "Modern Times," wowing the Cannes film festival this week.

Factory worker

More than half a century after its making, Chaplin as the factory worker, and Paulette Godard as the hungry barefoot "gamin" of the post-Depression years, come back to the big screen in a restored copy of the film, almost every bit as sharp as a new production.

The hilariously funny and biting 1936 classic is to close the festival on May 25 ahead of its release in cinemas and on DVD.

A satire and a social critique in typically burlesque Chaplin style, the film opens on a fleeting shot of a herd of pigs going to the slaughter-house and a big crowd bustling out of the subway.

It also features some of the best-known scenes from Chaplin's decades-long career—pelted by corn and covered in soup by a new-fangled feeding machine on the factory floor, and swallowed up by giant cogs and wheels on an assembly line.

In the film, Chaplin the factory worker has a nervous breakdown, gets arrested wrongfully as supposed leader of the angry unemployed, spends time in jail, meets and falls in love with Paulette Godard, whose father is

CHAPLIN/ E2

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Russian twosome stirs up a little musical controversy

By Noelani Torre

THEY may be girls, but Julia Volkova and Lena Katina are certainly not "girlie"—not in the fluffy bubblegum meaning of the word. This goth-y Russian duo make up t.A.T.u., the latest girl group (if you can call two people a group) storming the airwaves these days.

Debut album

Since the release of their debut album "200 Km/H in the Wrong Lane" (Universal Music Russia), the girls have been garnering a great deal of attention—not just for their music—a mix of techno and pop—but also for the nature of their personal relationship.

Julia and Lena, it seems, are lovers, and though that's hardly rare nowadays, it's still enough of a pop music novelty to most. To illustrate, the video for their hit single "Ya Shosla S Uma" (All the Things She Said) shot up the Russian charts due partly to scandalous bits of kissing between the girls. (Interestingly enough, those bits were edited out in the video we saw on MTV, but the full version can be seen in the CD itself, plus an interview with Julia and Lena.)

Distinctive

Their relationship isn't the only thing people are talking about, however. There's also their particular brand of pop that is distinctive enough to be interesting.

t.A.T.u.'s sound is a mix of techno and pop, with a touch of their own goth edginess. It isn't something you'd expect from two fresh-faced teenagers who perform onstage in short schoolgirl minis *ala* Britney Spears.

Both Julia and Lena are 18 and have a background in music. Lena's father is an eminent Russian musician, and Julia studied at the State Musical School. They auditioned independently for scriptwriter/director Ivan Shapovalov, who was planning on creating a new girl group that would eventually be called t.A.T.u.

BOTH Julia and Lena are 18 and have a background in music.

That name, by the way, has no particular significance to its two members. Tatu means tattoo in English.

It's early days yet for the twosome, though they've already received their share of citations. Their "Ya Shosla S Uma" video won MTV Russia's Video of the Year Award in 2001, and they've sold more than a million albums in Europe alone.

Opening track

The album's opening track is "Not Gonna Get Us," the English version of their Russian original "Nas Ne Dagoniat." This song has been enjoying some airplay lately, and is a perfect example of t.A.T.u.'s electronic pop sound. It has the fast beat and repetitive refrain, as well as the youthful energy.

Some people might find the refrain a little trying to listen to, however, and you might feel like banging your head on the wall after sometime.

Their hit song "All the Things She Said" is not as strident, but is equally infectious. It also deals with an issue that still excites a little controversy these days—homosexual (in this case, lesbian) love and relationships.

Teenage confusion

The album has some softer, less repetitive tracks, like "30 Minutes" and "Stars." Both songs relay teenage confusion, and the latter touches subtly on the difficulties of a homosexual relationship.

There's also a remake of an '80's Morissey/Marr classic, "How Soon Is Now." The song adds variety to the album, giving it a touch of rock, though it also makes the collection less unified.

Still, this is more or less a solid debut for the duo, and judging from their bubbling energy and the fans they've attracted, they look like they're on their way to musical stardom.

The Lino Brocka I remember

By Ronald G. Mangubat

I THINK I was eight years old when I first watched "Maynila sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag" on television. I was so moved that I couldn't sleep that night. Of course at that time, I didn't understand the deep messages and subtexts of the film.

Real

All I knew was that the movie was very different from the escapist Pinoy movies I had been watching. It was sad and the acting looked so real.

There were three unforgettable scenes in the film: Hilda Koronel's painful monologue when she and Bembol Roco were in a motel room; Tommy Abuel's extinguishing a cigarette butt in his palm when he told Roco that Koronel had died while trying to escape from her Chinese employer, and the dramatic final scene when people chased Roco when they saw him kill Koronel's Chinese boss.

And then I remember reading the name of the movie director in the credits—Lino Brocka. I became an instant fan.

Out of the 68 films Brocka made, I was only able to watch 27—not an impressive record for a self-professed fan. But in each of these 27 movies, I could instantly recall scenes in detail because they were superbly acted. It is often said that Brocka could make even the lousiest actor essay a credible performance on screen. As a matter of fact, I've never heard of actors who performed badly in a Brocka movie.

Questioning look

I remember them all: Gina Alajar's questioning look in the final scene of "Bayan ko: Kapit sa Patalim," a subdued Lolita Rodriguez and a hysterical Charito Solis in the confrontation scene in "Ina, Kapatid, Anak," Phillip Salvador's lament and hubris when he carried his dead son in "Orapronobis," Vilma Santos' rape scene in "Rubia Serbios," etc.

BROCKA. Outstanding artist and activist.

In "Nakaw na Pag-ibig," (Brocka's 29th film, loosely based on Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy,") in the scene where Phillip Salvador was about to push his lover (Nora Aunor) off a cliff, the audience clapped and whistled in admiration when Aunor's face was shown close up on screen, full of terror, confusion and anger. To this day, I consider that scene as one of Aunor's best dramatic acting moments. Only a Brocka could make her act like that.

But aside form being an actor's director, Brocka was also famous for his being a tough political activist. Unafraid, Brocka was a common fixture in rallies during the martial law and post-martial law years. He was a staunch opponent of censorship.

Hypocrisy

Close friends say he abhorred elitism and hypocrisy, and this is mirrored in almost all of his films. Observers noted that even in his commercial films, Brocka would add his signature social commentary in one or two scenes.

Brocka had depth, substance, passion and commitment. This is why nobody has portrayed life in the slums the way he did. He understood poverty deeply and had a firm grasp of its dynamics.

Masterpieces

I miss the feeling of watching a Lino Brocka movie because the critically acclaimed and supposedly relevant Filipino movies today pale in comparison with the masterpieces of the late National Artist for Film. Brocka's movies have fire and heart and ask disturbing questions about people, society and life.

I wish his serious works would be preserved and become available in VCDs and DVDs because the younger generation who might not even be aware of who he was can see for themselves how great an artist he had become!

The gift of family

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

How swiftly time has flown: Next week, we'll be celebrating the first year of the new lease on life that God has deemed best to bless me with.

Valiant effort

It was on May 30 last year, when I attended the family's traditional Mayflower ritual in your Tita Letty Magsanoc's Valle Verde home, that people noticed there was something very wrong with me. Of course, I made a valiant effort to gloss over my afflictions but, since I was already limping, leaning on my friend Albert Minguez for support as I walked, and practically dragging myself to go from one place to another, people immediately sensed I was ill, despite the smile I bravely wore on my face.

I tried to hide my problem from the family. But I began to worry when things got worse with each passing day. Like, I was walking down the hallway of UST Hospital to the clinic of Dr. Pinggoy Duran, whom I wanted to consult about an eye problem, when I suddenly froze and couldn't take even a single step anymore.

Program

I remember I was almost always late for my dzMM program, because the short distance from the ABS-CBN lobby to the radio booth took me forever to navigate, simply because my legs were developing an attitude problem and were not responding well to what my brain was telling them to do.

I pretended I had to talk to whoever was conveniently available along the way so I could stop and rest a while until I could manage a few steps again.

I didn't feel any pain—except for the bothersome sensation that my insides were being pulled from both sides—first horizontally, then vertically, then horizontally again...

My friend Bobbing Garcia, who somehow knew I needed a doctor, recommended me to her nephew Dr. Tee Wiling at the Metropolitan Hospital. I went to Dr. Wiling and he and his wife were so nice and kind—but they were on their way to Paris at the time so he really didn't have the time to make a thorough examination of what ailed me.

When I went home, severely exhausted and barely able to go up the stairs to my room, I found that my nephew Dr. Nico Magsanoc had been frantically calling the whole day. And the inbox of my cellphone was maxed out by his urgent text messages practically begging me to go to St. Luke's—his mom, who was in the US then, promised to "kill" him if he failed to convince me to go. He said that he already arranged for everything, my doctors were already waiting for me at the hospital lobby—and all I needed to do was show up.

Self-pity

I still didn't want to go. For one, I fretted that I was such a bother to the family. You know me, Clara, I hate it when people fuss over me. For another, I kind of felt a twinge of self-pity since I needed help to go to the hospital but all I had with me then were Ka Ester, your niece Camille and you. (I'm sorry, dearest child, but I thought then that you were too young to handle such an adult thing as taking care of me. Of course, you so gloriously proved me wrong soon after.)

I tried my best to assure myself there was nothing wrong with me. But there was something in the tenor of Nico's voice when I talked with him on the phone which told me in no uncertain terms that I was in hell and I had better follow his advice if I wanted to get out of there. It was, therefore, with utmost reluctance that I went to the hospital.

Sorry, my dear Clara, for making you go through the supreme ordeal of bearing with my royal brathood that afternoon. You asked for my age so you could properly fill up the hospital admittance form, but I simply glared at you. I also stubbornly refused to be wheeled into the hospital—because, I felt, there was something utterly helpless about people on wheelchairs and I didn't want any of that.

Thankful

But, of course, as soon as I got out of the car, I was thankful there was a wheelchair available because my legs had turned to jelly and I could barely stand, much less manage a decent approximation of a walk.

After that, it was all a blur but, from the sinking feeling I felt inside, I knew I was going downhill fast. Then, I fell asleep. That was June 8. I woke up days later! A nurse was slapping my cheek. She thought I was falling into a coma.

Waking up gave me a strange, almost eerie feeling. It was like attending a wake—for me. Everybody was crying although they all went through the motions of hiding the tears from me.

Then, they introduced my doctors to me. I had a neurologist, a cardiologist, a nephrologist, a medical internist, a diabetologist, an endocrinologist, an anesthesiologist, a psychiatrist and a dietitian.

I told myself, "I must really be in bad shape.—They need this many doctors to take care of me? I practically have a specialist for every vital organ in my body, and more!"

I didn't want to sleep, because I was afraid I wouldn't wake up anymore. And I secretly talked with Ka Ester, my personal maid (to tell her what outfit I wanted to wear in my coffin) and to Atty. Paul Bernardino, my lawyer (to instruct him to give what to whom when I died).

Catheter

Then, on June 14, they operated on me to insert a catheter in my shoulder area and a fistula in my forearm. They were necessary for the thrice-weekly dialysis I needed to have, from then on to forever.

June 19, I left the hospital. At this point, Clara, I'd like to thank the people who came to visit me at that lowest time of my life—in defiance of Dr. Nico's very strict orders that I was to receive absolutely no visitors.

Fr. Jerry Orbos came. So did Pastor Ben. Also Fanny Serrano, Rexy Tiangco and Pempe Rodrigo. Theirs were the loudest voices in the prayer brigade that stormed the gates of heaven for my speedy recovery. Bobbing came with Vernie. Albert brought Azenith Briones. Bhoy Navarrette also came. And Angge was a constant presence, fussing and doting on me like a mother hen.

The megastar, Sharon Cuneta, sneaked into my room one night, and all the darkness was blown away. I shall eternally hold this big bundle of blessings named Sharon closest to my heart.

Tears

And, of course, the family was there—from Tita Ansing to Ely and Tad, Pilar and Butch, and Bo, and Ricky, and Dolly, and you. Annette, Nats and Pat in the US called everyday. At first, I couldn't talk to them. How could I? The mere mention of their names sent tears rolling down my face. But I soon relearned the joy of embracing the love that they have for me.

Which brings me to the biggest realization I've had after this episode in my life: We all go back to family. No matter how high we've soared to the heights of success or how deep we've plunged into the depths of grief and sorrow, in the final lap of this journey called life, we go back to family.

I think that one of the many reasons why God allowed me to go through this life-changing experience was for me to appreciate the fullness of the gift of family. Being sick opened up for me the joy of basking in the comfort of the love that only family can give.

Masarap pala na may nag-aalaga sa akin. Before, I refused to be cared for—I was too independent a spirit to bind myself to the "bondage" of family. And I was more comfortable caring for family than having my family care for me.

But my 11-day stay at the hospital did a lot of good to me. I now love being loved by my family!

It's been a roller-coaster ride. It's been exciting, even fun. A whole new world has opened up for me. I've met a planetful of new friends. And I've trodden the path back to God and family. It's a beautiful life, dearest Clara!

Meanwhile, I still have to write my speech for the group of kidney doctors who have invited me to speak to commemorate June as kidney month.

Pops on 'Inday, Heart to Heart'

Don't forget to catch concert queen Pops Fernandez tomorrow, May 25, on "Inday, Heart to Heart," 10:30-11:30 a.m., GMA-7. She talks about the men in her life and dissects with clinical precision the unsinkable issue that goes by the name of Martin Nievera.

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FERNANDEZ. Talks about the men in her life.

CHAPLIN. In creating his signature Tramp character, he wanted "everything in contradiction."

Charlie Chaplin and his funny walk are back . . .

From page E1

shot dead by riot police. And the plot goes on . . . .

Digital projector

The film is being screened using a digital projector, a fledgling technology drawing images from computer memory intsead of old-style spools of celluloid.

The restorers of the film, French film firm MK2, describe the quality as "almost equal" to the copy made for the world premiere in New York in 1936. In all, 126,000 images were scanned and retouched.

Shot with no dialogue while other filmmakers were already making "talking" movies, Chaplin restricted himself to sound effects—such as the barked orders of the factory boss (modelled on Henry Ford) on the speaker system, or stomach gurglings after a cup of tea.

In his autobiography, Chaplin recounts how in 1914 he created the persona of the Tramp, a figure that in less than a year turned him into the biggest movie star of the time and a cinematic legend.

"I thought I would dress in baggy pants, big shoes, a cane and a derby hat," he recalled. "I wanted everything in contradiction: the pants baggy, the coat tight, the hat small and the shoes large."

Then aged 24, he added a small moustache to add age without hiding his expression.

Restored version

"I had no idea of the character. But the moment I was dressed, the clothes and the makeup made me feel the person he was; I began to know him." Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" was released in a restored version last year drawing huge crowds, notably at its premiere at the 2002 Berlin film festival, just 30 meters from Hitler's bunker.

After the premiere of "Modern Times," MK2 plans the release this year of "The Gold Rush," "The Kid" and "The Circus."

AFP

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12. Crisanta D. Nicolas - San Pedro, Laguna
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8. Melissa M. Iglopas - Bagbag, Novaliches
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10. Normita C. Herrera - Sta. Ana, Taguig

NORTH LUZON
11. Carlit D. Sanchez - Angeles City
12. Emelita G. Mapanao - Purok 5, Baguio City
13. Erlex E. Edejer - Sasmuan, Pampanga
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17. Maria P. Carreon - Binalonan, Pangasinan
18. Marquitala F. Sabardo - Dagupan City
19. Mary Jane M. Evangelista - Baguio City
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SATURDAY *Special*

Nora Aunor holds her audience in the palm of her hand

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN we took our seats at the Araneta Coliseum last Saturday, 30 minutes before Nora Aunor's "Gold" concert was about to start, we were dismayed to see that the Big Dome wasn't even half-full. Our favorite Superstar deserved a much better turnout on her 50th birthday celebration!

Observers

Was her time really over, as some industry observers have dourly observed? No, she was too good and unique not to be given an umpteenth time to recover lost ground, and make herself relevant anew to today's entertainment scene.

Happily, as the show closed in on its 8 p.m. starting time, Nora's fans, both old and new, started arriving in droves. And, when the concert finally started, the coliseum was full.

It was important to us that Nora be given a superstar-sized reception on this latest landmark in her personal and professional life, because she has contributed so much to local entertainment:

She broke the *tisoy* monopoly on big-screen stardom, gave *masa* viewers a movie luminary they could completely identify with and derive inspiration from, and helped raise the standard for film acting in this country.

Gratitude

Surely we had to remember, and express our gratitude for those bounties. Yes, Nora has sometimes taken her phenomenal success for granted, and she's allowed her special gifts to be compromised by unprofessionalism and vices. But, all told, her achievements are greater than her flaws and excesses, so her turning 50 should be cause for celebration, not fault-finding.

We held these thought in check when Nora's show started, with Kuya Germs looking back at her childhood in Iriga and her early start in show biz, courtesy of the "Tawag ng Tanghalan" national singing contest.

Devotees

Germs' personal notes were welcome, but he went on too long, so we were impatient to get the *pasakalye* over with, and for Nora to prove to everyone that she still had what it took to excite and inspire a coliseum full of her old and new devotees.

Another mental aside: Nora's ability to do this was being doubted by nay-sayers who observed that, quite often, she was no longer in good voice, and she looked old and enervated, to boot. But we refused to entertain such quibbles for long. She was the country's first Superstar, this was her big night, and she *had* to make it one of the most memorable highlights of her career!

First notes

Well, that's exactly what she did. From the time she appeared onstage and sang the first notes of her demanding opening number, to her finale and encores more than two hours later, Nora held her audience in the palm of her hand.

Unlike her last big show at the coliseum, she was in good voice throughout her "Gold" concert. Listeners thrilled to the unique texture of her famous singing voice, now lower in pitch than it was at her prime, but otherwise as expressive and captivating as it has ever been.

More expressive

Indeed, it was even more expressive, now that she was more mature, experienced and judicious, and knew that good singers don't have to scream to hold their audience in thrall. Younger divas could learn important lessons from Nora in this regard, and spare their listeners' eardrums and sensibilities from more punishment.

Best of all, Nora truly enjoyed herself throughout her concert. She must have deeply appreciated her fans' impressive show of force at this important event in her career, and gratefully gave them, not just a memorable musical evening, but everything else she could.

Guest singers

Completely at home on the coliseum's stage, she joked with the crowd, basked in its love, expressed her affection and gratitude in turn, and had herself a great time—despite the fact that she had to work so hard during the long concert, exiting only for a few minutes to change outfits, while her guest singers held center stage.

Although we've resolutely maintained that Nora isn't the tired has-been that some observers say she is, we were frankly surprised at the amount of work that she did on her concert last Saturday.

She sang, she danced, she had to do so many spiels, she kept the whole show well-paced and eventful—very few entertainers, of whatever age, could have done as well. No wonder, the avid coliseum crowd kept on cheering her to high heavens—as the country's once and future Superstar.

AUNOR. She kept the whole show well-paced and eventful—very few performers, of whatever age, could have done as well.

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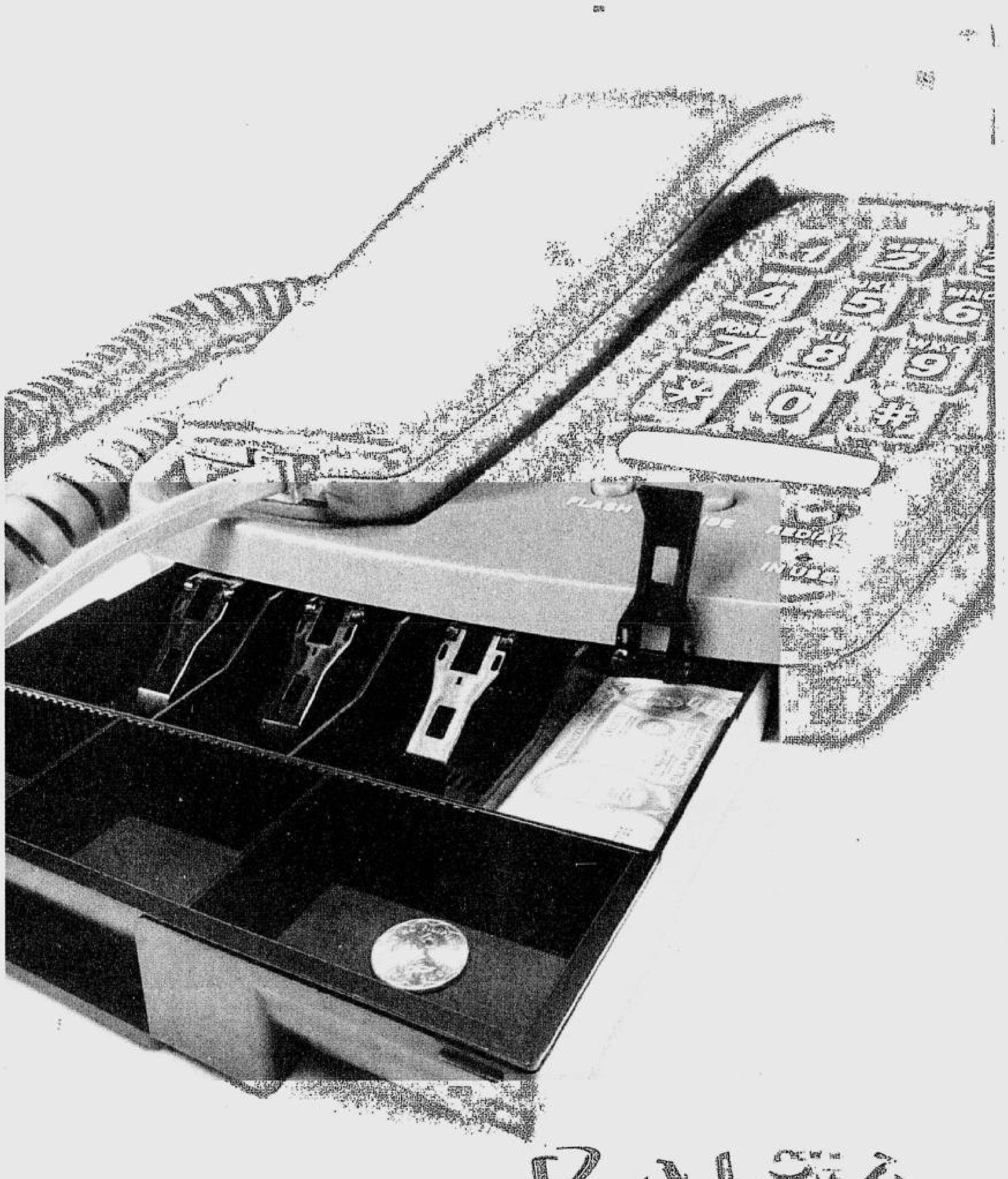

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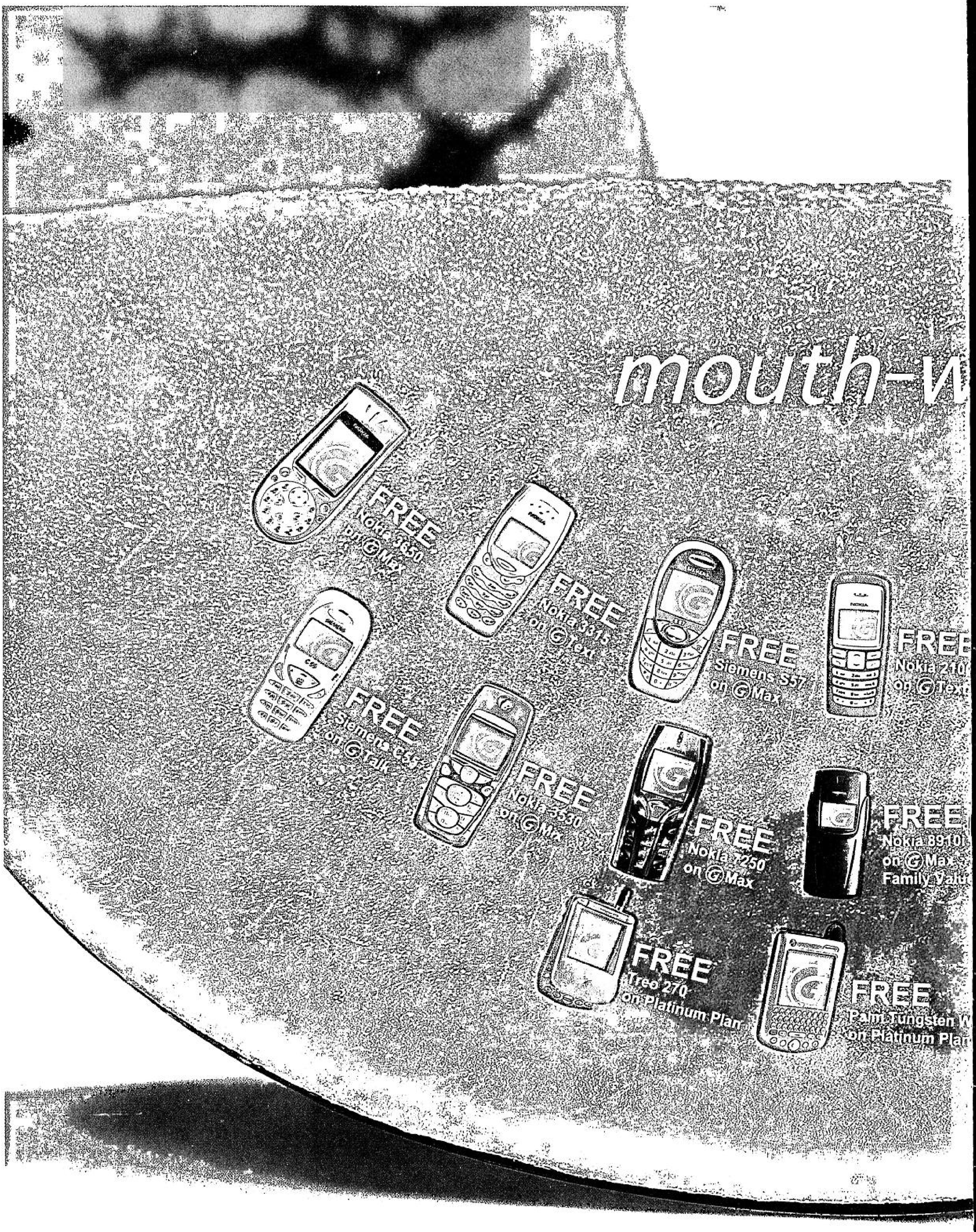
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McGregor goes back to his roots, wins acclaim

MCGREGOR. In "Young Adam," he turns in his finest performance since his portrayal of a heroin addict in "Trainspotting," which launched his career.

REUTERS

By Paul Majendie

CANNES—After "Star Wars" and "Moulin Rouge," Scottish actor Ewan McGregor has gone back to his roots for a dose of gritty realism that won acclaim at the Cannes Film festival last Saturday.

Stark drama

He starred in "Young Adam," a stark drama set in Fifties Scotland that was hailed as his finest performance since his portrayal of a heroin addict in "Trainspotting," which really launched his career.

"Cannes 2003 has seen its first critical hit," the Screen International trade paper said of his performance, roundly applauded at Saturday's showing.

For McGregor, small is beautiful after the multi-million dollar blockbusters.

"I had a feeling round about that time that I certainly wanted to do something smaller," he told Reuters on a trip to Cannes to promote "Young Adam." "I had quite a run of big ones with 'Star Wars,' 'Moulin Rouge' and 'Black Hawk Down.' That's great, they were fantastic, all of them," he said. But "Young Adam" caught his attention.

> In his new starrer, he plays a rootless young drifter who discovers the body of a young woman floating in the water. Was it an accident, suicide or murder? The grim tale unfolds from there

Barge

"I read it and I had the same gut feeling when I read the 'Trainspotting' script for the first time," he said. "It was one of those one in a million roles." In the film, he plays Joe, a rootless young drifter who finds work on a barge. One day he and the barge owner discover the body of a young woman floating in the water. Was it an accident, suicide or murder? The grim tale unfolds from there.

Excitement

"The excitement and adrenalin you get from making a small film is that you all have to pull together. There are fewer of you and I love that, the fact that you know everyone," he said.

"On a film like 'Star Wars' or 'Moulin Rouge,' at the end of the film you still did not know some of the people who made it because there were hundreds of them.

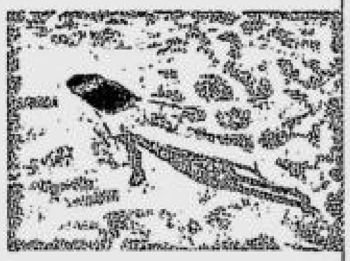
"On 'Young Adam,' you finish the film and you feel like you are walking away from a family. It's brilliant and I love that sense when you know that everybody on the set is pushing to get the job done." McGregor said producers had to fight to get backing.

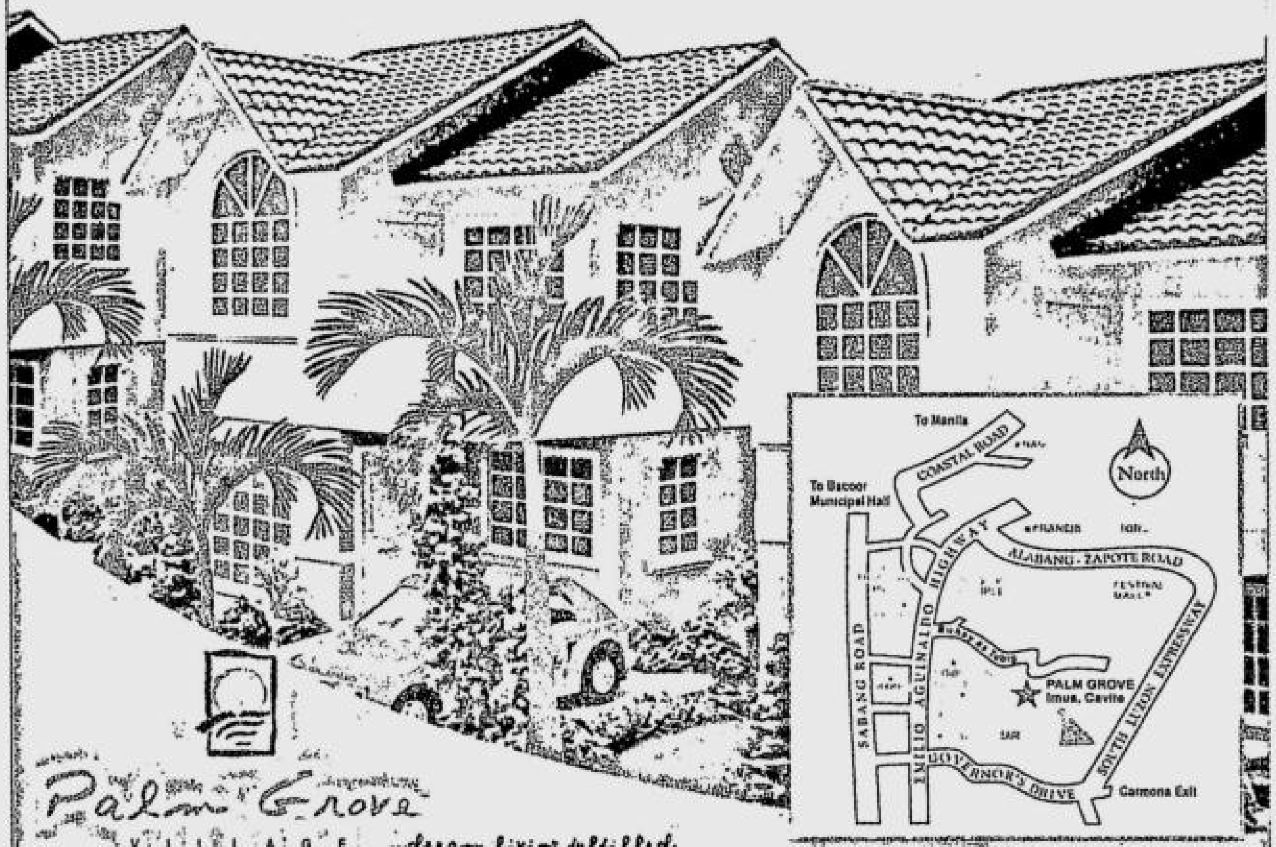
"The current climate was that if you were going to make a romantic comedy, then there would be no problem getting your money. But if you wanted to make something dark and edgy, British film financiers were saying 'we cannot help you.'"

McGregor's next work will be on a rather larger canvas—his third Star Wars epic. "I find the process very difficult. It couldn't be more opposite to the experience on this film.

"Now I know what to expect, I hope to have more of a laugh with it. I would imagine there has got to be some pretty tasty fighting in this next one."

Reuters





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Steakosaurus, anyone?

SOMEONE once told me that, from my articles, she could tell that I eat beef a lot. Steak, to be more specific. The truth is, I hardly eat meat—but, when I do, I like having the best!

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

I picked up this way of thinking from a friend who only indulges in Belgian or Swiss chocolates. He firmly believes that it is only these places that produce superior chocolates—What about our very own Philippine Chocnut?

Three places

Ever since I had Roast Prime Rib at the House of Prime Rib in San Francisco, I have stopped looking for something similar or close to it. Here in Manila, I can recall three places that serve good steak: Katre's Prime Rib along Morato, L'Incontro's T-Bone steak along Reposo, and Prince Albert's Roast Prime Rib.

I have been sampling many places along the Timog and Morato area, and one of my favorites is a restaurant right beside Santi's along Timog. Zucchini's was once run by the owners of the deli beside it.

Santi's has superior quality meats. A bit pricy, but worth it. Their Black Angus tenderloin is fantastic! I would sometimes pick up a whole Angus Prime Rib and bake it for hours. Also super! And they carry one of the widest selections of wines around.

Siding

Anyway, this restaurant beside it offers a nice, huge chunk of meat in the form of a 600-gram Angus Prime Rib Steak. Grilled to your desire, it has a siding of potatoes, pasta or Risotto. They call this steak, Steakosauraus. With a nice Madagascar pepper sauce on the side, it is one of the best-tasting steaks in Manila today.

I had dinner with four high-school classmates and we shared this meal, with some braised lamb shanks with saffron sauce. Also very good.

For someone with a huge appetite like me, this steak would be just the right size. There are other steaks on the menu which I intend to go back and try. My sights are set on the Angus tenderloin and the T-bone. It's hard to miss with steaks of this quality. Check them out!

Zucchini's is on Timog. Coming from Edsa, go towards the Morato rotonda. Before reaching it, the restaurant will be on your left, beside Santi's deli.

Happy eating!

Liverpool gears up for Paul McCartney's homecoming

By James Crawford

LIVERPOOL, England—Paul McCartney fans said on Monday they were itching to welcome him home next month for his first major solo concert in his northern England home town since 1990.

Musician

The Liverpool-born musician, who made his name as one quarter of 1960s rock and roll phenomenon the Beatles, will play the 90th and final gig of his "Back in the World" tour to 30,000 fans on the banks of the city's River Mersey on June 1.

One fan who is well aware of the value of his concert ticket is Eddie Porter, who for 24 years has been a guide on the "Magical Mystery Tour" bus that shuttles tourists to Liverpool's many sites of Beatles interest.

"Put it this way: you can buy me love, but you can't buy my ticket," he said over a beer near the Cavern Club, where the Beatles performed nearly 300 times.

McCartney had 17 number one hits in Britain with the group.

"They were a unique band, they were teenagers talking to teenagers. When they played, your whole body could feel the heat of the music," Porter said.

Further success

Since the band split in 1970, McCartney has had further success with the group Wings, and as a solo artist.

In all, some two million people will have seen his latest tour, which started in California in April 2002. It has made McCartney the world's highest earning celebrity and will have taken him through more than 15 countries including concerts in Rome's Colosseum and Moscow's Red Square.

Liverpool city council said tickets for the final date sold out in four hours.

Reuters

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SATURDAY *Special*

KEANU Reeves, left, leads the film's stellar cast in a glitzy promotional appearance and premiere at the world's biggest film festival. REUTERS

'Matrix Reloaded' finds a home at Cannes, and everywhere else

By David Germain

CANNES, France—"The matrix is everywhere," Laurence Fishburne says in the sci-fi hit "The Matrix." The sequel, "The Matrix Reloaded," is *really* everywhere.

20 countries

Unlike the original "Matrix," which opened in the United States in March 1999 then trickled into overseas theaters over the next few months, the follow-up debuted last weekend in about 20 countries, including France, where "The Matrix Reloaded" played at the Cannes Film Festival.

By its third weekend, "The Matrix Reloaded" will be playing in more than 100 countries.

With their biggest franchise films, studios are learning it pays to blanket the planet at the outset, rather than the traditional practice of establishing a movie first in the United States, then rolling it gradually out to other countries.

"The Matrix Reloaded" is following that new strategy, which undermines video piracy and satisfies an increasing overseas hunger for Hollywood movies. "X2: X-Men United" also debuted simultaneously in 95 countries this month.

Global times

"These are global times," said Avi Arad, president of Marvel Studios, whose comic-book adaptations include the "X-Men" movies, "Spider-Man" and next month's "The Hulk." "If you have a movie that appeals to everybody, that's not significant only to one culture, it makes sense to start it everywhere."

The makers of "The Matrix Revolutions," the final part of the Wachowski brothers' sci-fi trilogy due out this November, want to launch the upcoming film into international release even faster than the current one.

"We hope to open literally in every territory in the world, so the movie goes everywhere at the same time," Joel Silver, the trilogy's producer, said before the Cannes premiere of "The Matrix Reloaded."

Cannes made for a glitzy global bow for the movie, with stars Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss, Fishburne, Monica Bellucci and other cast members the day's main attraction for celebrity-watchers at the world's most prestigious film festival.

Distributor Warner Bros. has revved up the release schedule of the last two "Matrix" movies largely out of worries that pirated DVD and videotape versions would turn up in some countries, particularly some Asian markets, before the films could hit theaters.

Bootleggers try to obtain a print to make a video dub or simply shoot a film with a video camera directly off the movie screen. Studios say they can lose millions of dollars in revenue on a film if audiences are able to obtain illegal videos before the movie's official release.

Experience

"Certainly, we have had the experience in the past after films opened in the United States, DVD and VHS copies show up all over the rest of the world very quickly, and it cannibalizes our potential box office," said Dan Fellman, Warner Bros. head of US distribution.

Overseas audiences also have taken on greater importance to Hollywood. US moviegoers once accounted for most of a film's theatrical revenues, but with keener worldwide interest in US productions, some movies now earn two-thirds of their money outside of

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Meet the dedicated hosts and staff of 'I-Witness'

By Ronald G. Mangubat

ANYONE who hears the hosts and staff of GMA-7s "I-Witness", describe their heavy workload and killer schedules would probably think they're a bunch of masochists.

By their own admission, however, they simply love what they do, are inspired by the respect that they have for their weekly one-hour TV documentary show, and believe in the goals and mission of the program.

Committed

"I-Witness" is hosted by five dedicated, aggressive and committed broadcast journalists, each one bringing to the show his own brand of investigative journalism. They are also the writers of their respective episodes.

Howie Severino represents a new breed of broadcast journalist, being a reporter and cameraperson at the same time. A respected print journalist for the past 14 years, this Master's degree holder in Environment, Development and Policy from Sussex University is a co-founder of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism.

Severino used to be with "The Probe Team" before he moved to "I-Witness." His colleagues in the program describe him as the most cerebral of all the hosts because of his analytical and rational approach in dealing with stories that appeal to more intelligent viewers.

Vicky Morales is described as a "gut-smart" journalist who knows and gets what she wants. She is able to interview hard-to-get personalities. This Ateneo AB Communications graduate has been with GMA-7 for the past 12 years and is seen nightly delivering the news in "Saksi."

Kara Constantino David started as a writer/researcher for GMA in 1996. For two years, she also hosted a radio program for urban women aired over dzRM. A UP AB Broadcast Communication graduate, Kara wrote and reported for "Brigada Siete" and currently reports for "Saksi" and "Frontpage." She is known as "the people's girl" because of her exceptional rapport with the masses.

Streetsmart

Ma. Judea "Maki" Pulido is known as the most streetsmart of all the hosts. She projects a tough image, often taking on beats usually assigned to male reporters. This UP Film Communications graduate loves to tackle political issues. Maki has been a news producer/reporter since 1994.

Jose "Jay" Reyes Taruc III is a masscom graduate from Centro Escolar University. He started as a researcher and production assistant at RPN-9 in 1993. A year later, he joined "Brigada Siete" and eventually became a producer/reporter for the daily newscasts of GMA news and public affairs. In 1998, his story on Comfort Women won the award for best coverage of an ongoing issue in the CNN World Report Awards. In 2000, his documentary on "Child Labor" also won in the George Foster Peabody for Investigative Reporting.

FROM left, Vicky Morales, Kara David, Howie Severino, Maki Pulido and Jay Taruc.

Reflections

Together with their supervising producer, Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil and executive producers Minette Tirona, Nanette Matilac, Lloyd Navera and Alwin Alburo, the "I-Witness" hosts talk about their work as TV documentarists, their reflections on Philippine society, and their reactions to criticisms about their show:

How much of your time is being eaten up by your work in "I-Witness"?

Vicky: *Mas makain siya kaysa sa* daily news. Recently, I had to cut down on my episodes because my husband is studying in the States so I have had to make frequent trips abroad.

Kara: *Nag-le-*leave *ako sa* news *para lang makapag-*shoot for "I-Witness." *Puyatan talaga.*

Maki: *Minsan naman, nagkakasabay.* Like when I was doing the "Alipin" episode, we were in Mindanao and we had to cancel one day of shooting *kasi may barilang nagyari* between the government and the MILF. *Tigil kami sa* "I-Witness" because I had to do the news *kasi walang* reporter *dun.*

Jay: *Di ko ma-*quantify *yung oras kasi kahit na tulog ako, napapanaginipan ko pa yung* topic, *at lahat ng* aspects *ng* production *iniisip ko pa rin.*

What is the most difficult problem that you face in producing this program?

Howie: Lack of time. Some people will say *hindi naman 'yan tunay na* documentary *kasi* it takes *mga* six months to one year to come up with one. *Yun ang isa sa mga* main criticism *sa amin, na* our program is a fast-food documentary. *Ako naman,* I've learned to live with that *kasi* it's the only thing in local TV that comes close to a documentary show, if they claim it's really not a documentary show. In other countries, they have a million-dollar budget, they have six months to do it, they get to travel around the world. *Wala kaming ganoong* luxury.

First episode

Vicky: *Pinakamahirap din yung paghahanap ng* topic. *Lalo na yung* first episode. You'll be judged by that, so *malaki ang* pressure to come up with a good topic.

Maki: *Mula sa pag-iisip ng* topic *hanggang sa* research *at* actual shoot, writing, getting the right case study, *mahirap*. We do everything in two weeks.

What's the best compliment you have received from being hosts and writers of "I-Witness"?

Kara: *Ako yung tinext ako ng tatay ko. Diyos ko, di pa sinabi ng harapan!* (Laughs). *Yung tatay ko kasi, bihira mag-*compliment. *Masyadong mataas ang* standards *namin sa bahay. Hindi kami yung tipong naku, ang galing-galing mo, anak.* So *nung sinabi niya sa* text *na* good work, Kara, *Diyos ko, talagang tuwang-tuwa ako!*

Jay: *Ako naman, pag na-re-re*cognize *ako ng mga bata. Tatawagin nila akong "Batchoy," "Basurero," "Taong Grasa."* That means they're watching my shows!

Howie, you started writing for the print medium. Was it difficult to shift from print to broadcast?

Howie: Yes. *Iba yung pagsusulat sa dyaryo kasi dun,* I could write from the top of my head. Here I have to write to video. *Nahirapan ako kasi tamad akong manood ng* video. I spend one or two days just viewing the footage.

And then you have to write the script in Filipino.

Howie: *Problema talaga kasi lumaki ako sa Amerika.* For a long time, I didn't even feel that I was Filipino. But being able to write and speak in Filipino makes me feel whole. *Kasi, dati wala akong* feeling *na may* roots *ako. Ngayon, ang sarap ng pakiramdam, kahit minsan baluktot yung* Filipino *ko at inaayos pa ng* editor. Now that I'm approaching middle age, *medyo lumilinaw na yung aking* identity as a Filipino.

What stories really touched you?

Issues

Vicky: *Ako, yung* "Riles." *Nagkasakit ako dun. Hindi ko akalain na* something like that *e mapapalawak ko sa isang* episode. We just stumbled on one issue after another. Another one was "Bulakbol." We showed *yung mga nag-cu-cut ng klase.* But when we were doing our research, we discovered *na malala pala talaga yung kaso. Ang* trip *ng ilang mga kabataan e mag-*slash *ng* wrist *nila* just for kicks! That was a shocker to me.

Another is "Askal," our episode on dog eaters. *Kasi* I'm very close to my pet and I passed judgment on people who eat dogs. After that episode, I understood where they were coming from. *May mga* tradition *pala 'yon. May mga* offering to the gods.

Maki: *Yung,* " Mga Babaeng Mandirigma" *at saka yung* "Sex Slaves." *Pero yung naawa ako ng sobra, yung* "Alipin" *kasi* I can't imagine *kung paano nila nakayanan yung ganun ka-grabeng* experience.

Electricity

Kara: For me yung "Gamugamo sa Dilim." *Ito yung mga barangay na walang koryente* up to now. And then I compared *yung barangay na walang ilaw at yung barangay* that invented its own source of electricity. Favorite *ko siya* in the sense *na pag nagpunta ako ulit sa Mindoro,* feeling *ko may pamilya ako.* The little girl I interviewed, *pinapaaral ko siya ngayon* and she sends me her report card.

Jay: *Yung mga nagkakalkal ng basura. Na-*meet *ko sila* two years ago, *tapos binalikan ko ulit. Kumakain sila ng mga tira-tira sa* fast foods . . .

And I saw the trailer *na kumakain ka rin ng tira-tira na galing sa basura. Totoo ba 'yun?*

Jay: *Naipit kasi ako kasi sabi nila, tingnan nga natin kung kakain si* Jay. So *ang* feeling ko, I had to do it. *Kumain ako pero binigyan ko rin yung* cameraman *at yung ibang kasama namin.* (Laughs)

Howie: *Sa akin naman, yung* "Dekada 70." Product *ako ng* '70s, *e,* so I was deeply affected by the whole mentality during that time. It's a reason why we are what we are now. It might be the reason why society is so corrupt. Another one was my X'mas episode, yung "Hulog ng Langit." It's about fertility. I interviewed all the childless couples who had a hard time conceiving children. *Kasama na kami dun, kasi* eight years *kami sumusubok na magka-anak.* Last year *lang kami nabiyayaan.*

Let me ask the executive producers: I have observed that you seem to dwell on poverty and grassroots stories. Is this deliberate?

Minette: It's very hard to avoid stories like that. We're not a first-world country.

There has also been criticism that you tend to play up the bathos, and that of late, your show is becoming a tearjerker of sorts.

Alwyn: Aware *kami dun. Ngayon,* conscious *din kami na huwag ng ilagay yung sobrang iyakan, kasi* OA *na.*

Ellen: *Siguro,* those who were educated in the west say that a documentary has to be cerebral. *Dapat walang iyakan.* Well, I disagree. Why? Because we're rooted in our audience and for Filipinos, *hindi ka mag-*wo-work *kung puro* cerebral *lang.*

Nanette: *Di ba* we're always amazed by the characters in telenovelas? *Mas* amazing *pa yung totoong buhay*. There's a galaxy of people out there *na may* untold stories.

Do you get to watch your competitor, "The Correspondents"?

Lloyd: *Oo naman!* (Laughs)

Alwyn: It's part of the job to monitor the competition.

What can you say about the show?

Ellen: They also have good stories.

Lloyd: And they're also thematic *na rin.*

How much support does GMA give to your program?

Alwyn: *Buhos*. Flagship program *nila ito.*

Ellen: The management also recently gave us slots to show the best of "I-Witness" for six consecutive Saturdays at 6 p.m. primetime. We're very excited about this *kasi* when Howie's episode, "From Iraq with Love" was shown on primetime, our rating was 21. It just proves that *may mga nanonood talaga sa mga ganitong* type *ng* show.

Mature viewers

Kara: *Palagay ko naman,* even before, *mature na ang Pinoy* audience. *Sabi nga ng tatay ko, never underestimate the Pinoy audience kasi matalino 'yan.*

Your job entails danger. Are you guys insured?

(Laughter)

Jay: *Konti lang....*

After doing all these depressing stories, do you believe that we're a damaged culture?

Howie: No, I don't believe in the concept, because it implies that we were once undamaged. *Maraming* defects *ang kultura natin,* but it's really important for people and institutions to do something to change it.

But all of you are not jaded *pa naman*?

Kara: *Hindi, kasi dito sa* "I-Witness" *matagal mong kasama yung* subject *mo, e.* You get close to them. You have a deeper understanding of issues.

Jay: *Maraming naituro sa amin yung mga* experiences *namin.*

Howie: I don't feel that, maybe because I get to choose my topics, so I won't choose something that I will be jaded about. There are times that I'm saddened by what happens to us as a nation, but sometimes, what saddens me as a Filipino also exhilarates me as a journalist.

Judy Garland's biggest heartbreak

By Behn Cervantes

BARBARA Hutton was the poor, little rich girl, a millionairess many times over, when the frail blonde inherited her grandfather's estates when merely a tot. Despite her great wealth and glamour, Barbara never managed to find happiness in her personal life, no matter if she married such desirable men as Cary Grant.

Cleavage

On the other hand, Marilyn Monroe was the much-desired sex kitten who never found security in her fame, lovers and/or husbands, who included baseball legend Joe DiMaggio and literary giant Arthur Miller. Her acting talent was too often upstaged by her ample cleavage.

For her part, gamin Judy Garland was one of the greatest talents who ever lit up the screen. Still, Judy never found the rainbow she dreamed about. No matter if she had throngs of fans, and great success that earned her home studio MGM many millions of dollars, Judy continued to dream that perhaps, somewhere over the rainbow, she would find happiness.

Her stage presence astounded crowds in her concerts, while film critics were forced to search for new and more appropriate adjectives to describe her scintillating effect onscreen.

Garland was a unique talent whose voice could coddle, excite and move hearts of all ages. She could also dance and clown along with the best of them. Considering that Judy co-starred with the likes of multi-talented Mickey Rooney, spectacular Gene Kelly and perfectionist Fred Astaire, her musical talents were indeed awesome. And her acting skills more no less as impressive.

GARLAND. Never found the rainbow she dreamed about.

Therefore, when second husband Sid Luft, who also acted as her manager, produced a musical version of 1934's "A Star Is Born" to showcase her musical skills and artistry, Judy's singing, dancing and acting reached unprecedented heights.

Shoo-in

She was a shoo-in for an Oscar, everyone thought. It was about time, too, considering how heartlessly MGM moguls had dropped her option after she and Mickey had earned the studio a fortune at the box office.

There hadn't been a performance quite like what Judy gave in "A Star Is Born." It was singing, dancing and acting at its very best.

Son

By Oscar time in 1954, Judy had just given birth to her son Joey. She was already mommy to Liza Minnelli and Lorna Luft. The baby boy completed her family, but the little guy Oscar would have highlighted her spectacular career.

Since she was the expected winner, television studios set up cameras in her hospital room. Her happy face would be beamed globally and her excited speech was certain to touch millions of Garland fans around the world. I was one of those faithful and excited devotees.

When the moment for 1953 Best Actor William Holden to announce the Best Actress came, the world literally held its breath. They expected Holden to announce, "The Oscar for Best Actress goes to Judy Garland in 'A Star Is Born.'" Instead, he said, "The Oscar goes to Grace Kelly for 'A Country Girl.'" What a monumental disappointment!

It forever made me cynical about the Oscar Awards. I quickly realized that indeed politics, biases and personal preferences play a role in the choice of winners, so fine performances are sometimes bypassed.

However, the passage and wisdom of time has proven the Oscars wrong. No one (of consequence) talks of Grace Kelly's performance in "The Country Girl" except as a role unexpected of her glamorous image. On the other hand, Judy's portrayal in "A Star Is Born" continues to win younger fans who have seen it on television or video. She lives on long after her death, along with other "more popular after death' icons like enigmatic James Dean, wildly exciting Elvis Presley and the tragic Marilyn Monroe.

No fluke

To prove that her acting in "A Star Is Born" was no fluke, Garland once more stunned critics and fans with her poignant performance in 'Judgment At Nuremberg." Her moving performance in that 1961 Stanley Kramer classic won her another Oscar nomination, in the Best Supporting Actress category.

This time around, she lost to Rita Moreno, who won for her spectacular characterization of the tempestuous but tragic Puerto Rican Anita in "West Side Story."

No doubt, Judy Garland was disappointed once more by her second defeat. But she remains a winner in her loyal fans' hearts!

Cinemax offers wide selection of popular movies

CINEMAX, one of Asia's leading movie channels, was relaunched recently with a new schedule of hits. Every night at 9 p.m., Cinemax offers viewers an enjoyable and entertaining movie.

New films

"We are focused on giving viewers a wide selection of popular movies that entertain, says James Marturano, HBO executive vice president. "Not just your usual Hollywood hits, but a host of other movies including new films that are not available theatrically in Asia. With a dedicated programming team that understands the viewers' lifestyles and movie needs, we handpick the most entertaining films that our viewers in Asia will thoroughly enjoy."

Starting with Sunday, "First on Max" features two back-to-back movie releases, telecast for the first time on Asian television, from 9 p.m.

From Mondays to Wednesdays at 9 p.m, "Max Hits" showcases star-studded hit movies. On Thursdays and Fridays, it's time for thrills and spills with action movies in "Action Max," also at 9 p.m.

Different theme

Come Saturday, it's "Thriller Max" at 9 p.m. for suspense movies that will keep you on the edge of your seats! There's a different theme every month. Right after that, for those who are game for even edgier thrillers, horror and supernatural movies, catch "Max After Dark," every Saturday, after midnight.

Every year, Cinemax offers viewers more than 300 new movies from major Hollywood studios and the best of independent producers from the US, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Asia. In conjunction with the relaunch, Cinemax is also unveiling a new channel logo plus a contemporary and provocative on-air feel. The overall cinematic feel, working with the snappy tagline, "Get Into the Movies," invites viewers to enter and explore great movie entertainment.

This month, catch new movies premiering for the first time on Asian TV: H.G. Wells' science fiction adventure "The Time Machine," with Guy Pearce, Samantha Mumba and Jeremy Irons, "Swindle" with Tom Sizemore, Sherilyn Fenn and Dave Foley, "Life Without Dick" with Sarah Jessica Parker, Harry Connick, Jr., Craig Ferguson, Claudia Schiffer and Teri Garr).

"Max Hits on Mondays" features "Boys On The Side" with Whoopi Goldberg, Mary-Louise Parker, Drew Barrymore and Matthew McConaughey, "Shout" with John Travolta, Heather Graham, James Walters and Linda Fiorentino, "The Heist" with Pierce Brosnan, Tom Skerritt and Wendy Hughes, and many more hits.

John Yench passes away

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

JOHN Yench passed away at 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 19, 2003 in the intensive care unit of Corona Regional Hospital in California. He died as a result of pneumonia and complications from gastro-intestinal obstruction.

Three sons

He is survived by his three sons Jack, Charles and Stephen. He was cremated on Wednesday, April 23rd and later interred with his wife, Lucy.

Many of his friends remember him as a walking encyclopedia. He was involved with the printed word all his life as journalist, correspondent, editor, columnist, as well as TV host.

Born in Russia during the revolution, he grew up in China where his career began with Associated Press (Shanghai bureau). John and his mother fled to China when John was only a year old, escaping the communist takeover of Russia.

They lived in Shanghai until John was transferred to the Manila bureau of Associated Press. He lived in the Philippines for 21 years (June 1949 to August 1970).

Co-founder

He was a co-founder of the Free Enterprise Society of the Philippines with former President Diosdado Macapagal and Rep. Benedicto Padilla. He was also active in the Kiwanis and Boswell Club.

John was always outspoken and wrote many anti-Marcos articles. Both John and Lucien Pan were informed by a source close to Marcos that they were on his list of undesirables, prompting him to leave for the United States on Aug. 14, 1970.

From 1948 onward, John worked on a universal, self-consistent language in which a word's sound alone reveals its meaning, without the need for a dictionary. These ideas were summarized while John was acquiring a Master of Arts degree at the California State University.

His eldest son, Jack, compiled his works and published them in a book titled, "A Universal Language for Mankind," which you can get through the publisher, Writers Club Press, or through his sons: Jack—jackyench@hotmail.com, Charles "Chaz"—CYLABLUSA@aol.com, Stephen "Steve"—SHYench@aol.com.

Crater lake

Many of his friends will recall being invited to Tadlak Lake, a crater lake in Los Baños which was John's favorite weekend hideaway.

John always thought of his years spent in the Philippines as his most special and treasured period.

Of all the titles bestowed on him, his favorite was "John Yench of Manila."

Good father

Condolence, too, to the family of Sonia Recto-Lopez and daughter Len-Len, for the passing of loving husband and good father, Joseph C. Lopez of Bacolod. His body was flown to Manila last Sunday, and after a noontime mass, he was cremated at the Loyola Memorial Park.

Sonia's classmates from Assumption Convent Manila prepared lunch, while Nini Valdez brought two turbos to heat the fresh *pandesal* with ham, tomatoes and lettuce.

Sonia will continue residing in Bacolod, where she has established herself. Joseph C. Lopez, 66, will be missed.

Reuben Navarro

Reuben Martin N. Navarro passed away on May 17, 2003 at the age of 68, succumbing to a brain aneurism. His body lies in state in Bonn, Germany.

He is survived by wife, Hannelore Zimmermann, son Martin, daughter Catherine Lagourgue; his brothers, Nestor, Jose and Abelardo, and his sisters, Rebecca and Aurora.

He earned his college degree in agricultural economics from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños in 1957 and his doctorate and post-doctorate in economics from the University of Florida, USA and the University of Bonn, Germany.

His career spanned many different fields and countries. He was Science Attache in the Philippine Consulate in Bonn, Germany and a Senior Economist of the Common Fund of Commodities of the World Bank based in Amsterdam.

He worked at WHO/UN in Geneva. He was a consultant in the Management and Technical Services group of Victorias Milling Co., and a director and technical consultant for Philab Industries Inc. owned by his good friend, Hector C. Navasero.

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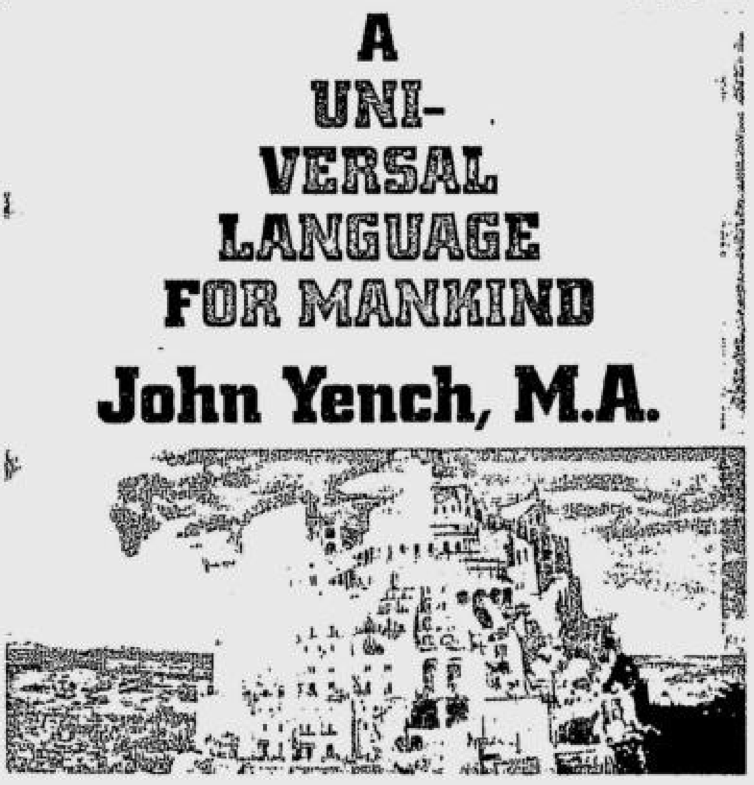


YENCH's book on a self-consistent language in which a word's sound alone reveals it meaning.

'Matrix Reloaded' finds a home at Cannes, and everywhere else

From page G1

North America.

The speed with which entertainment news travels over the Web or on cable television has fanned that trend, leaving non-American audiences unwilling to wait weeks or months to see films already playing in the United States.

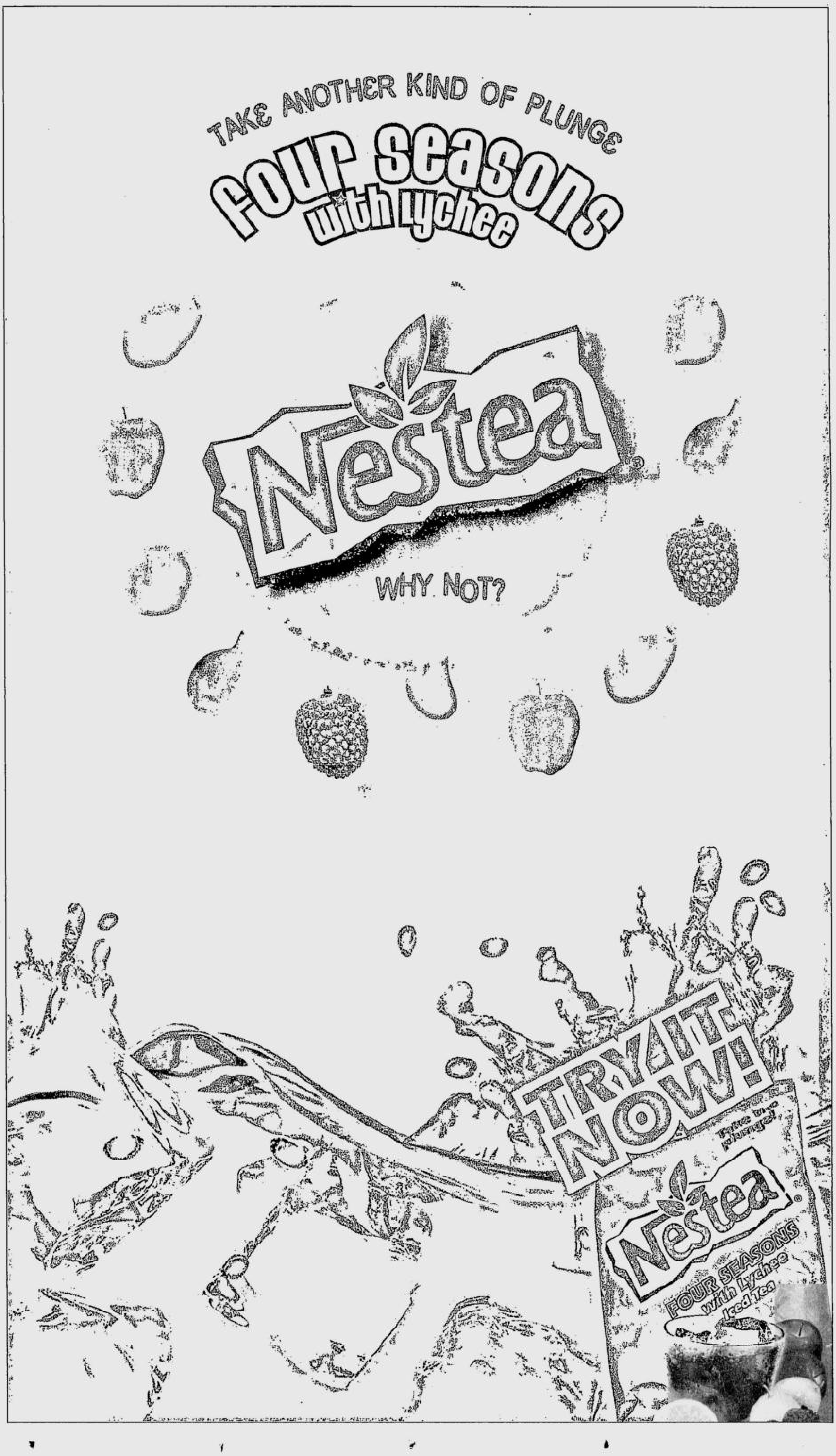
"With the Internet as across-the-board as it is, information is getting out there faster and faster and faster, and moviewise, it makes sense to keep pace," said Bruce Snyder, head of US distribution for 20th Century Fox, which released both "X-Men" movies.

Slow rollout

Many movies, though, still benefit from a slow rollout. But Universal plans quick worldwide releases for its summer movies "The Hulk" and "American Wedding," the third in the "American Pie" series.

The studio has a more measured strategy behind prestige films such as the upcoming "Seabiscuit," based on the bestseller about the Depression-era racehorse. After opening the picture in North America, Universal hopes to build gradual overseas interest in the film through this fall's awards season.

"We're going to take our time with 'Seabiscuit,'" said Marc Shmuger, Universal Pictures vice chairman. "This is the kind of movie where you want to allow that message of quality to get out there." *AP*



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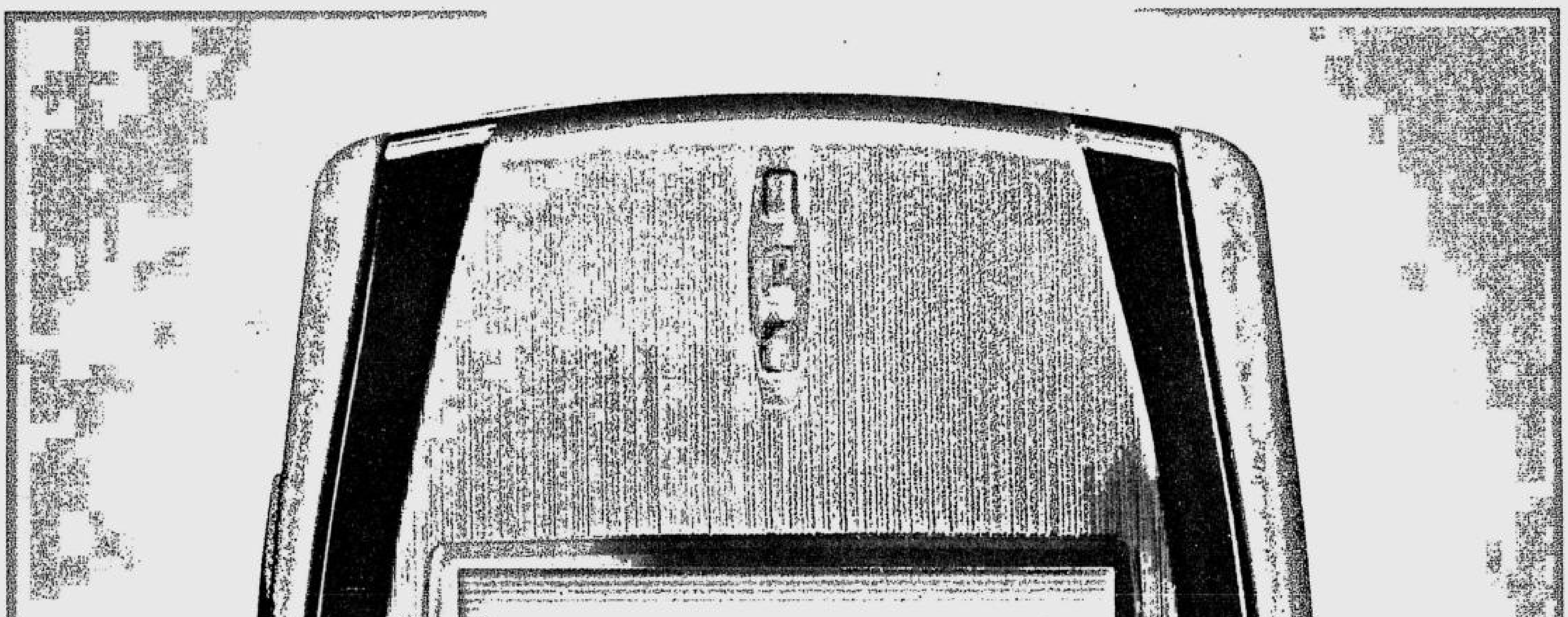

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SATURDAY *Special*

FPJ plays championship billiards in 'Pakners'

POE JR. No special effects.

By Edmund L. Sicam

HOW many times must Fernando Poe Jr. deny that he's running for the highest post in the land next year? It seems questions about his supposed presidential intentions won't cease until the last day for filing candidacies, which is many months away.

New tack

At the press dinner for "Pakners," his latest movie with billiards ace Efren "Bata" Reyes, FPJ adopted a new tack when the press asked him these political questions: He simply remained silent, as in he did not utter a single word, and smiled. He would only reply when the discussion shifted to his latest movie,

"Pakners" pairs him with Reyes, whose achievements in billiards have earned him a place in the international Hall of Fame. In the movie, Reyes is a *promdi* who loses his money to con artists. Jeepney driver FPJ comes to his aid and discovers that he is a whiz at billiards (naturally). The two become "*pakners*" in the game and proceed to demolish the opposition.

FPJ swears that his billiards shots in the movie are real and do not involve special effects. He actually sinks those difficult shots. —Of course, with a little help from Reyes, who instructed Da King on how to position his cue stick on the billiards table. What's nice about moviemaking is that, if a player doesn't make the shot, he can do another take.

FPJ shares that he had done another movie on billiards many years ago, and Reyes was one of the extras on the set. Now, "The Magician" has gained international fame and co-stars with the action king.

As in any FPJ movie, this one features not just billiards action but also the trademark fight sequences. Reyes gets to punch his foes *a la* FPJ in one sequence. Unlike other FPJ movies in which the action king seeks revenge against people who have wronged him and in the process, kills all 100 of them, "Pakners" is relatively light. The bad guys are only interested in downing the "Pakners" at billiards.

Beautiful ingenue

Another element in FPJ movies is the beautiful lady who becomes his romantic interest. For this movie, the lady is not exactly an ingénue since she has done several movies, but she is relatively new in the field.

January Isaac, known for his TV commercial where she plays Lumen, is a policewoman who shows FPJ that she is more than a beautiful face. She's also good at martial arts, and Jan is quite convincing because she indulges in martial arts offscreen.

Reyes has his own leading lady. Since he provides the comic element, that role went to a comedienne, Candy Pangilinan. "The Magician" has the makings of a funnyman and should do better in the movies than Manny Pacquiao, who's more eloquent with his fists than with his mouth.

FPJ and Reyes are strongly identified with San Miguel, which made this movie an ideal vehicle for the beermaker's sponsorship. In fact, the final face-off is supposed to take place in the San Miguel 9-balls National Doubles Challenge. During the dinner, many San Miguel managers came to show their support for the project. So, will FPJ be doing more commercials for San Miguel? That is a strong possibility.

Unlike previous movies, FPJ, who uses Ronwaldo Reyes as his directorial monicker, doesn't meg this one. That assignment has been given to veteran comedy director Tony Reyes. It's no surprise, therefore, that Tony's favorite actor, Joey de Leon, makes a cameo appearance in this movie as a pickpocket. Another cameo role is played by Ai Ai delas Alas, who is supposedly FPJ's ex-girlfriend, with emphasis on "supposedly."

Campaign material

Those who believe FPJ is running for president will probably look at this movie as campaign material, like the commercials that feature Ping Lacson, Juan Flavier and San Miguel chairman Danding Cojuangco. For now, however, FPJ has no answer, so the press will leave it at that—until his next presscon, when the same question will again be asked!

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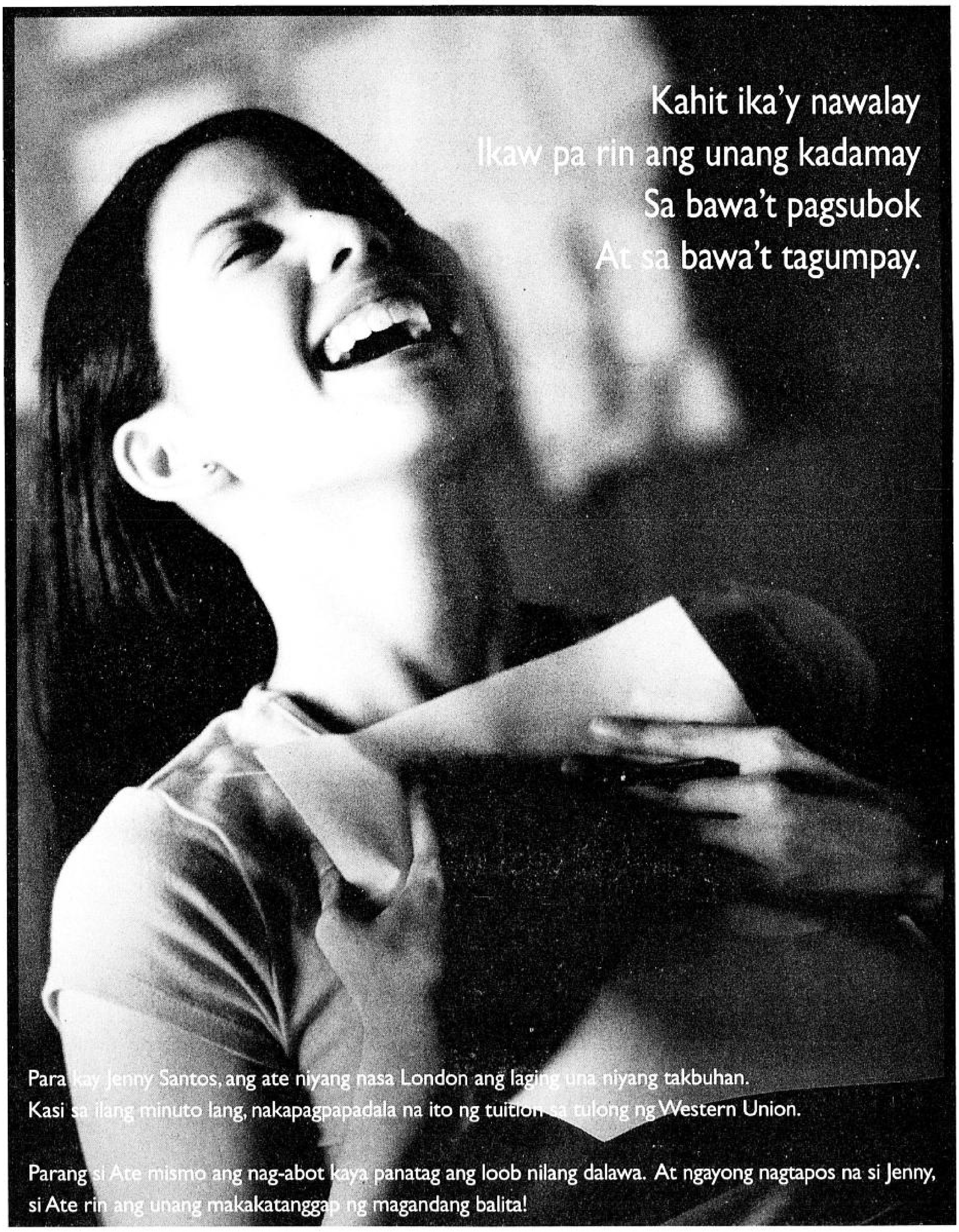

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'Les Miserables,' the Great White Way's second-longest running show, closes

By Michael Kuchwara

NEW YORK—In a flurry of red, white and blue balloons, streamers and confetti, Broadway bid goodbye to "Les Miserables."

It was an emotional final performance for the musical, which closed Sunday after more than 16 years and 6,680 performances, second only to "Cats," Broadway's longest-running show.

Stirring finale

Even before the show reached its stirring finale, the invitation-only audience was on its feet and cheering the performers. Cheers, screams and applause had started the moment the orchestra struck up the first notes of the musical based on Victor Hugo's epic novel, and they didn't stop for the entire evening.

"Time for au revoir," producer Cameron Mackintosh told the audience at the curtain call as he thanked the cast and "all the great, fantastic casts we've had before." The show's authors, Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg, as well as its co-directors, Trevor Nunn and John Caird, stood beside him beaming.

CAST members, both past and present, take the final curtain call at New York's Imperial Theatre.

AP

After the curtain call and speeches, some 40 children who had appeared in recent high school productions of "Les Miserables" gave mini-reprises of the show's better-known songs. They were joined on stage by all the performers, including members of the original cast, for one last bow.

Tour

The show, which originally cost $4.5 million, opened March 12, 1987, and was a staggering box-office success, winning eight Tony Awards including best musical. Grosses for the New York production alone have totaled more than $410 million, and the musical is still out on the road with a tour that has been booked into 2004.

The English-language version of "Les Miserables," which tells the story of Jean Valjean and his pursuit by the relentless Inspector Javert, had its premiere in London at the Royal Shakespeare Company's Barbican Theater in October 1985 and moved that December to the Palace Theater, where it is still running. *AP*

Kidman and Von Trier had three-hour screaming row over their new movie

By Catherine Bremer

CANNES, France—Nicole Kidman and Lars von Trier had a three-hour screaming match in a forest to clear the air while shooting the Danish director's latest epic—but she still loves working with him.

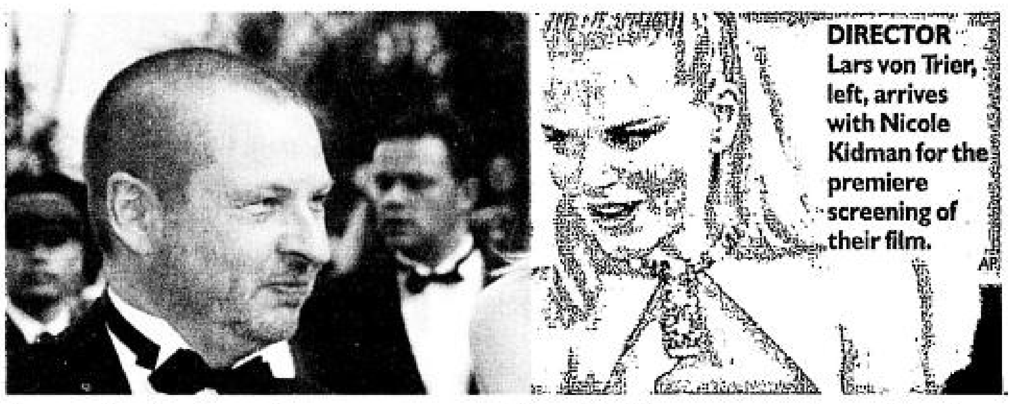
Fragile woman

A hot favorite to win the coveted Palme d'Or this year, "Dogville" is the grueling story, shot on a stage set with no actual buildings, of a fragile woman's efforts to be accepted in a grim, end-of-the-road Rocky Mountains town.

Despite her initial aversion to acting with a dog that is actually a chalk drawing on the ground, and dragging around a weighted chain attached to her neck, Kidman pledged, in front of hundreds of journalists, to extend the film into a trilogy.

"Lars, I'm making the trilogy with you, you know that," Kidman exclaimed after the shaven-headed Dane cajoled her into announcing her decision to the public.

"When I arrived in Sweden, the first week was tricky. He had preconceptions about me and I did about him," Kidman said of Von Trier, who fought so badly with Bjork while making "Dancer in the Dark" that the Icelandic singer quit acting for good.



DIRECTOR Lars von Trier, left, arrives with Nicole Kidman for the premiere screening of their film.

AP

"Then we went off into the forest and had a heart-to-heart. It was a three-hour, warts-and-all, screaming walk. But we came out with a very strong commitment to each other."

Kidman, who won an Oscar in March for her portrayal of the suicidal writer Virginia Woolf, shines in "Dogville"—and not only because her sunflower yellow hair is the only colorful thing in a predominantly dark grey movie.

Small set

The three-hour epic, likely to go down better with arty critics than the popcorn-munching masses, never leaves the small set where the only objects are a few items of furniture, some small props, and the odd car. The sky is mostly dark.

Houses are depicted by white chalk lines on the ground, and the opening and closing of doors is shown through mime.

"The one quality I have is that I'm not afraid to make films in strange ways. The idea was to remember how much fun we can have in a reading, without all the other stuff," Von Trier said.

Kidman, as Grace, arrives in the isolated, backward Dogville while fleeing from gangsters and the townsfolk eventually agree to let her stay, even when the police start looking for her.

Reuters

Stage fright is pride masquerading as insecurity

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN we direct actors in plays and musicals, we often have to deal with stage fright. Practically all actors experience mild stage fright, but some get it really bad, and it gets in the way of the effectiveness of their performance, so we have to intervene.

Basically shy

First off, we ask them why they think they're such a bundle of nerves onstage. Some of their replies: They're basically shy, are afraid of forgetting their lines or blocking, fear being laughed at by the audience, and think that they can't measure up to the demands of their roles.

We tell them that we believe what they say, but we think the problem of stage fright comes from something more basic: not from their insecurity, but from excessive pride.

Huh? How can this be when they're saying that they're nervous because they don't think they're good enough? What does pride have to do with any of that?

We explain that nervous actors are prideful because they are such perfectionists that they don't think they're allowed to make mistakes. The stress of trying to be perfect (an impossible task) is such a strain that they get terribly uptight.

Mistakes

Once they see the light and "allow" themselves to make mistakes, they feel less nervous and uptight, and thus experience less stage fright.

COURTENAY. Agrees with Dame Edith Evans' view that stage fright derives from the respect an actor feels for his audience.

So, the truly humble actor is the most relaxed person onstage, because he doesn't force himself to aim for an unattainable ideal. Of course, actors can't get *too* relaxed, because there *are* standards of performance to be met. We're just talking about the perfection freaks.

Speaking of stage fright, it affects even the best actors, as these Broadway anecdotes will show:

Bill Hutton, the golden boy who played the title role in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," was a hit when the show was performed off-Broadway. When it got to the Great White Way, however, it was a completely different matter.

Run-through

An afternoon run-through of the show in its new Broadway venue was scheduled for the afternoon, but technical problems kept the cast from the stage. Finally, there was just enough time to rehearse the opening number before the audience was let into the theater.

Hutton, with little time for reflection, rushed to the shower, into makeup and costume, and onto the stage. Only then, as he faced the audience, did the thought hit him: "This is my first performance on Broadway." And he blanked out!

For seconds that seemed like eons (until a fellow player prompted him), he forgot the movements he was supposed to make, and he just stood there—a victim of what psychiatrists label "performance anxiety," or stage fright.

Opening night

The affliction knows no bounds, from amateur child actors in a school pageant, to the greatest stage luminaries. Lynn Fontanne once declared, "Any

STAGE/ H3

L.A. judge refers 'Spider Man' case to referee

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—This is a a job for Super-Ref.

A judge on Tuesday granted a request by Sony Pictures Entertainment to send its legal dispute with Marvel Enterprises Inc. over last year's blockbuster film "Spider-Man" to a court-appointed referee.

Licensing agreement

Marvel , the New York-based comic book publisher which sued the studio in February seeking termination of their "Spider-Man" licensing agreement, had asked for a jury trial in the case.

But Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Alexander Williams ruled that the licensing pact calls for the two sides to take such contract disputes to a "referee," typically a retired judge chosen by the two sides.

He rejected Marvel's argument that a jury trial was called for on grounds that the contract was induced by fraud, an allegation he said was "easy to make, hard to prove."

He gave Marvel and Sony until June 27 to choose a mutually acceptable referee or declare an impasse, in which case a referee will be named for them. Attorneys for both sides said they expected to agree on a jurist without much trouble.

Under California's rules for "alternative dispute resolution," proceedings conducted by a referee are open to public scrutiny, as are documents connected with the case. But as a practical matter, attendance is somewhat more difficult because hearings are often held in the conference room of a private office rather than in a courtroom.

Decision

Also like a jury trial, the decision of a judicial referee is subject to appeal.

Alexander previously denied a request by the studio to close documents and proceedings to the public.

Marvel filed suit against Sony in February seeking $50 million in damages and termination of its "Spider-Man" licensing deal after the upcoming sequel to last year's hit film based on the web-slinging comic book hero.

Marvel has accused Sony of essentially trying to hijack the Spider-Man brand by claiming exclusive merchandising rights to the character and "cross-promoting" the superhero with other Sony features, in violation of their partnership.

Sony counters that it is Marvel that has acted in bad faith. Sony says the dispute arose after the studio questioned Marvel's accounting practices and that the comic book publisher is using the litigation as leverage to pressure Sony to renegotiate their licensing deal. Reuters

Disney to begin renting 'self-destructing' DVDs

MEL Gibson's starrer, "Signs," is part of the pilot program.

LOS ANGELES—This disc will self-destruct in 48 hours.

That is the warning The Walt Disney Co. will issue this August when it begins to "rent" DVDs that after two days become unplayable and do not have to be returned.

Disney home video unit Buena Vista Home Entertainment will launch a pilot movie "rental" program in August that uses the self-destruction technology, the company said on Friday.

Process

The discs stop working when a process similar to rusting makes them unreadable. The discs start off red, but when they are taken out of the package, exposure to oxygen turns the coating black and makes it impenetrable by a DVD laser.

Buena Vista hopes the technology will let it crack a wider rental market, since it can sell the DVDs in stores or almost anywhere without setting up a system to get the discs back.

The discs work perfectly for the two-day viewing window, said Flexplay Technologies, Inc., the private company which developed the technology using material from General Electric Co.

Mechanism

The technology cannot be hacked by programmers who would want to view the disc longer because the mechanism which closes the viewing window is chemical and has nothing to do with computer technology.

However, the disc can be copied within 48 hours, since it works like any other DVD during that window.

Buena Vista did not disclose pricing plans but said the discs, dubbed EZ-D, would be available in August in select markets with recent releases including "The Recruit," "The Hot Chick," and "Signs." *Reuters*

Rare exhibit of Hemingway's belongings opens at his former home in Cuba

THE EXHIBIT is set up in a tower built by the writer's third wife, Mary, as a study for her husband.

By Andrea Rodriguez

HAVANA — The house where American writer Ernest Hemingway once lived in Cuba opened its doors for a short time Tuesday to show off some of his rarely seen possessions: film scripts, photographs, the certificate for his 1954 Nobel prize for literature.

Farm

Just east of Havana at the farm known as Finca Vigia, the house where Hemingway lived from 1940 to 1961 is a museum, where the doors are usually locked and visitors must peek into the rooms from the outside.

The exposition where visitors got a close look at some of Hemingway's belongings was set up in a tower built by the writer's third wife, Mary, as a study for her husband.

"These pieces are very rarely shown," said museum worker Belkis Cedeno of the objects displayed in glass cases, including an original script for the film adaptation of Hemingway's book "The Old Man and the Sea."

Spanish translation

Also shown was a copy of the Cuban magazine Bohemia from 1953 that carried a Spanish translation of the same book, and an old Life magazine with a cover story about the author.

The exposition honored the museum's 50th anniversary last year. The celebration was postponed to coincide this week with an international colloquium that brought about 60 academics and Hemingway fans to Havana.

Among those visiting are the late author's niece, Hillary Hemingway, and one of his granddaughters, Jenny Phillips.

The house surrounded by green thick bushes and mango trees were left pretty much as Hemingway left it. In a bathroom upstairs are scales on which the author marked his periodic weigh-ins with a pencil. AP

Stage . . .

From page H2

actor who claims he isn't frightened on opening night just isn't telling the truth."

To Mike Burstyn, star of the musical "Barnum," stage fright results from the fear of audience rejection. To Bob Dishy, it is the fear of being judged.

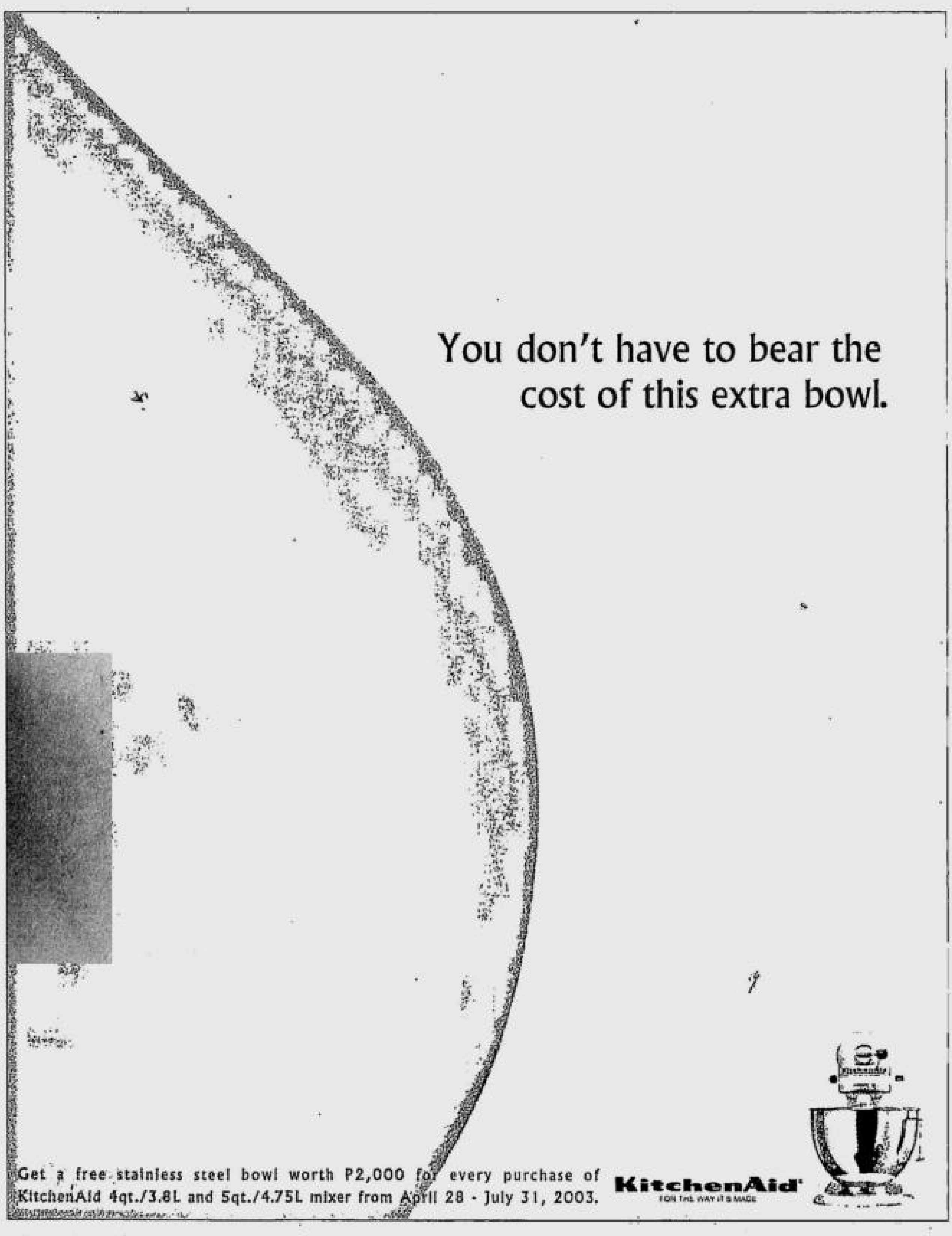
Dorothy London has said, "One reason you go into the theater is because you have a great desire to please people—so, you are always afraid that you won't." (Hey, she agrees with us!)

Tom Courtenay cites Dame Edith Evans, who used to say that stage fright derived from the respect one felt for one's audience.

Practical considerations

And Colleen Dewhurst believes that stage fright, particularly on opening night, is induced as much by practical considerations as by personal ones:

"Sometimes, the play has been a long time in preparation and you've turned down other jobs for it. Chances are those jobs have been filled and you could be unemployed in 48 hours if the new play you're in is a flop So, you're a bundle of nerves!" *(To be concluded)*



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Beart charms viewers again on the big screen

By Catherine Bremer

CANNES, France—Eighteen years after she set hearts beating by dancing naked in a forest in "Manon des Sources," Emmanuelle Beart seduced a packed cinema all over again on Friday.

Moving portrayal

Acclaimed as one of France's finest actresses and for her beauty, Beart gives a moving portrayal of a mother-of-two fleeing Nazi Germany's 1940 invasion of France in "Les Egares" (Strayed), one of 20 films competing for the 2003 Palme d'Or.

"It was a fascinating character to play," said Beart, 37, who caused the May edition of the French Elle magazine to fly off newstands this month by posing nude for the front cover.

Seen as much more than a sex symbol in France, where she campaigns for social and political issues, Beart said she took inspiration from her grandmother for the role in "Les Egares," directed by renowned French film-maker Andre Techine.

"I have a grandmother who lived through this, travelling alone with her children. Her experience and the inner strength she had helped me prepare," Beart told a news conference.

Civilian exodus

Techine based his film on a Gilles Perrault novel about the wartime civilian exodus towards the south of France.

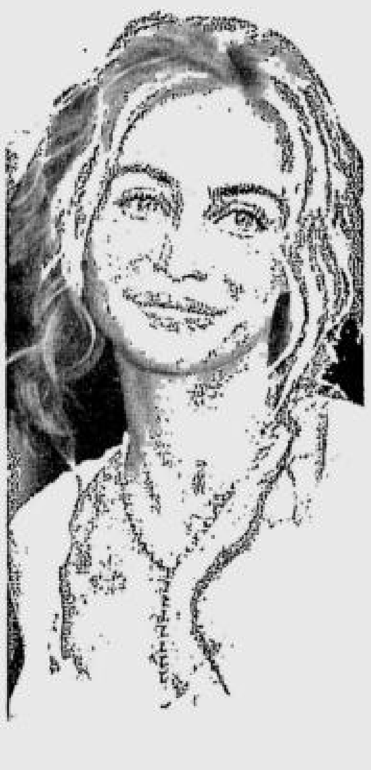
Set in the leafy Loire valley, the story sees the mother and her children join up with a lone 17-year-old boy as they flee into the forest to escape bombing from German warplanes.

After setting up home in an abandoned country house, cut off from the world, the family of three grows increasingly dependent on their secretive adolescent friend, who catches them rabbits to eat, while growing ever more curious about his background.

The film, one of five French entries in the main contest, is simple yet touching with a strong undercurrent of suspense.

"I was born around that time, so this is about what was going on during my own infancy. I did a lot of research, but I used it to describe something that gets away from statistics," said Techine, a regular at the Cannes Film Festival.

"Time, for these people, is suspended. Unusual circumstances like that can lead to very particular experiences." *Reuters*



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ADVT.

Cannes—paparazzi paradise for many budding starlets

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—The world's most glamorous film festival turned Brigitte Bardot from starlet to "sex kitten" overnight.

Madonna dropped her wrap on the steps of the Palais des Festivals to reveal her pointy Jean Paul Gaultier bra. The flash bulbs exploded, headlines were guaranteed.

Meryl Streep gave 48 interviews in a single day. It is not known how many accents she used.

Excess

For razzmatazz is everything and nothing succeeds like excess in this Mediterranean playground that plays host to the film festival where hype reigns supreme.

"Everyone is here from everywhere because everyone else is here as well and where else are you going to run into all those people?" said veteran US critic Kenneth Turan.

On the Riviera playground, Cannes was the perfect choice for a new film festival in 1939. Pity about the timing.

Mae West and Gary Cooper brought Hollywood glamour to the new festival. But after the first night screening of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," it was canceled when war broke out.

It did not start up again until 1946 and only became an annual feature in the '50s.

Publicity stunts

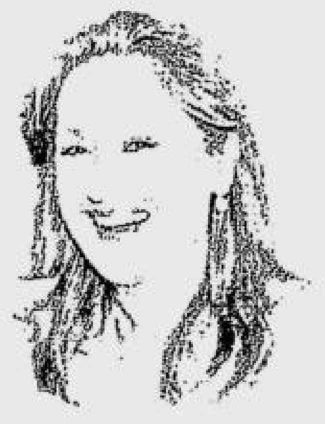
Then, in 1954, starlet Simone Sylva set the standard for publicity stunts—she dropped her bikini top before a bemused Robert Mitchum. A phalanx of photographers just happened to be watching. The abiding image of Cannes was born.

The outside world abruptly intervened again in 1968. With France in the grip of worker and student upheaval, French directors Jean-Luc Godard and Francois Truffaut pushed for and won the festival's cancellation at the halfway point.

Cannes has always prided itself on giving world cinema an international stage but Hollywood glitz can so easily steal the limelight. With the new "Matrix" film hitting town, 2003 will be no exception.

Despite the rigorous demands of 24-hour partying and the need to feed a voracious media machine, Cannes' allure shows no sign of fading.

For, as director Steven Soderberg said after his "Sex, Lies and Videotape," won the Palme d'Or in 1989, "It was like being a Beatle for a week." *Reuters*



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EU awards annual movie prize to 'The Magdalene Sisters'

BRUSSELS, Belgium—The European Union on Thursday awarded its annual movie prize to Scottish director Peter Mullan for "The Magdalene Sisters," a provocative depiction of an abusive Catholic convent.

The 25,000 euro ($28,000) prize is awarded each year at the Cannes Film Festival to the European movie shown in the largest number of EU countries. To qualify, the movie must be the director's first or second feature-length film.

Creativity

"This prize is testimony to the creativity and vitality of European cinema and shows that European films can be box-office successes in different European countries while still retaining their own personality," said EU Culture Commissioner Viviane Reding in Cannes, where the prize was awarded.

The film tells the story of one of the Magdalene convents, which were run by nuns on behalf of the Catholic Church. Youths were imprisoned and tormented in these convents for often absurd and cruel reasons, such as having been raped, according to the movie.

Mullan's second feature-length film, "The Magdalene Sisters" was shown in 12 European countries and drew crowds of several million. In France alone, it drew an audience of 560,000.

Provocation

The movie was denounced by Vatican Radio as "clearly false." The Vatican's paper L'Osservatore Romano described it as an "angry and rancorous provocation."

Also in the running for this year's EU award were two French films, including "Decalage Horaire" and "Une hirondelle a fait le printemps."

Previous winners include Damien O'Connell's "East Is East" in 2000 and Frederic Fonteyne's "Une Liaison Pornographique" in 2001. Last year's winner was "No Man's Land" by Danis Tanovic.

At the 1998 Cannes Film Festival, Mullan won the best actor award for his role in Ken Loach's "My Name Is Joe." Mullan is known for several short films, including the 1997 "Orphans."

In addition to the cash award, Mullan takes home a glass sculpture. *AP*

FELLINI. He revelled in the flamboyant and the fantastic.

Cannes pays homage to Fellini

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—Federico Fellini's cry of joy—"Viva Il Cinema"—is everywhere you look in Cannes as the film festival pays tribute to the Italian maestro on the 10th anniversary of his death.

Film legend

The ebullient words uttered by the film legend when he won Cannes' coveted Palme D'Or for "La Dolce Vita" are painted in giant pink letters two-story high on the Palais des Festivals. They adorn the official poster and are plastered across every souvenir T-shirt.

Twenty of the Italian showman's specially re-mastered films are being shown, many in the magical setting of a special open-air cinema on the beach.

Discussions

Cineastes sing his praises at round table discussions. Documentaries abound with one even offering details of a train sequence that was planned as the alternative ending for "Eight and a Half." Fellini would have loved the flashy setting for he, just like the Cannes film festival, revelled in the flamboyant and the fantastic.

"Fellini would intensify reality and make it bigger than it was," said his friend and biographer Gideon Bachmann.

Tribute

The tribute is doubly appropriate as this playground for the rich and famous is like a magnet for paparazzi—the celebrity photographers immortalized in "La Dolce Vita." The five-time Oscar winner, one of the greats of 20th century cinema, died at the age of 73 just one day after he and his wife and great inspiration, actress Giulietta Masina, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Like movie moguls peddling their dreams at opulent parties on luxury yachts in Cannes harbor, Fellini always delighted in the dream world of the silver screen.

Fantasy world

His fantasy world meant everything to him. "Things that are most real for me are invented," he once confessed. "I feel exiled, a bit empty away from the set. I cannot cope with what is called normal existence." Fellini would certainly have loved the irony of "La Dolce Vita" being revived in this fashionable Riviera resort where the probing lenses of the paparazzi reign supreme.

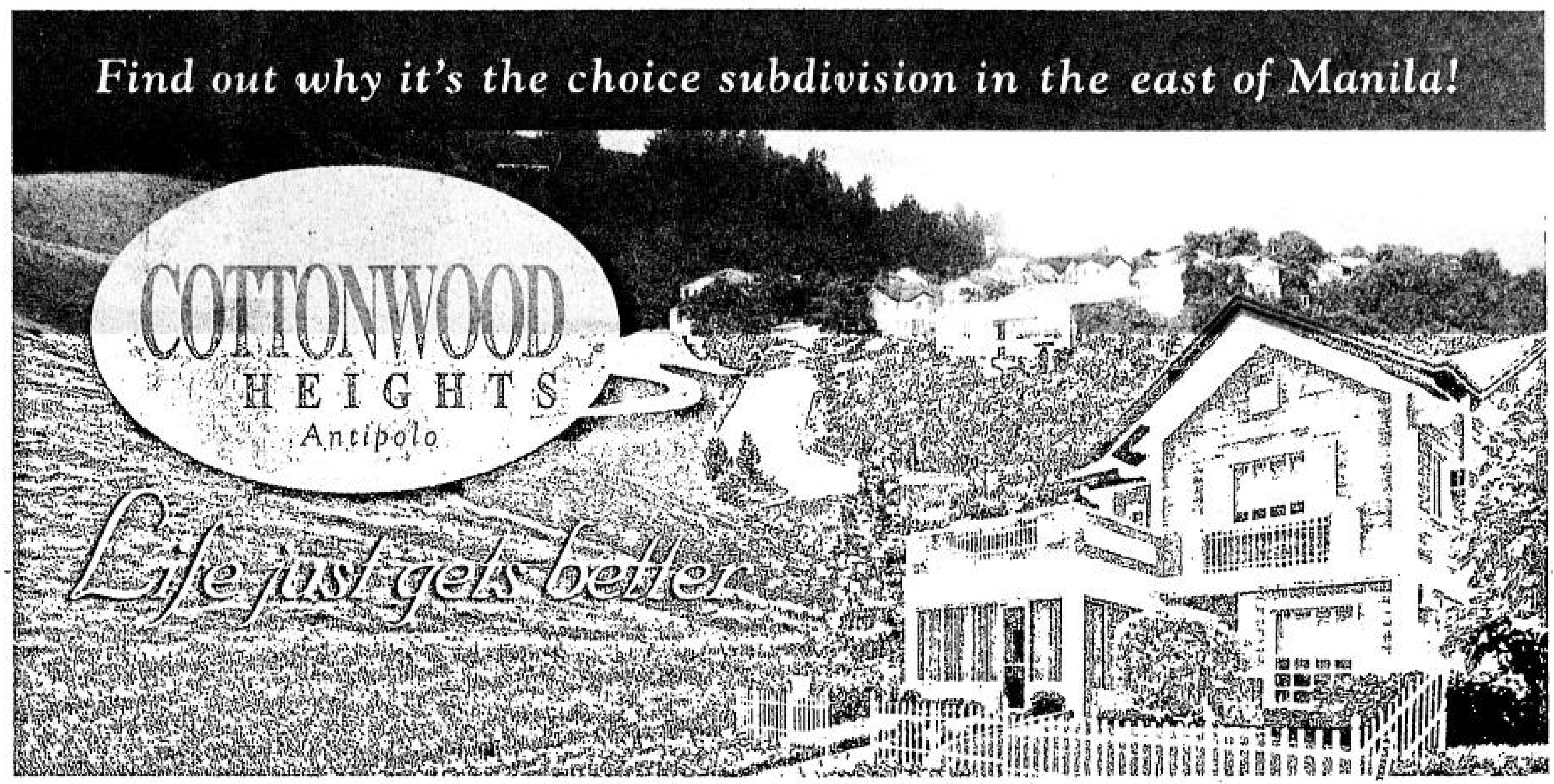
Photographer

For Fellini based a character in the film on Tazio Secchiaroli, the photographer who preyed on movie moguls, deposed kings and Italian nobility on Rome's legendary Via Veneto and captured them in candid shots.

The character was called Paparazzo, a name that immortalized the prying breed who have since chased every celebrity round the world from Princess Diana to Madonna. *Reuters*

THE ITALIAN showman loved to intensify reality and make it bigger than it was.

Find out why it's the choice subdivision in the east of Manila!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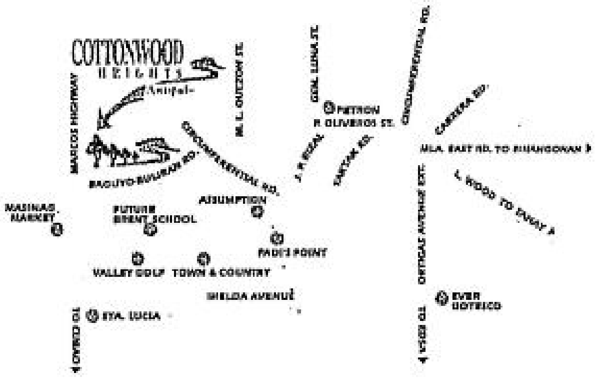
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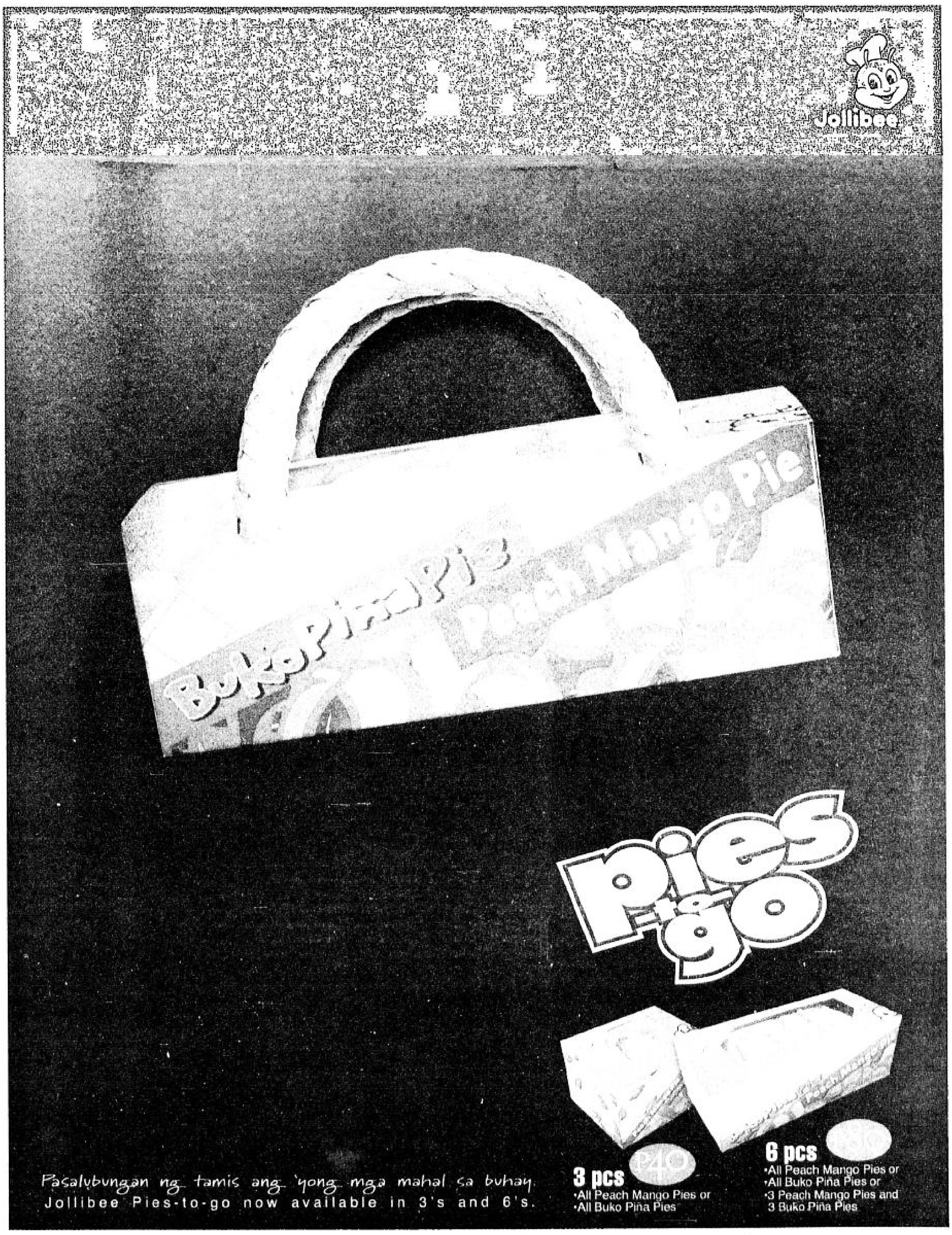
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Fil-Am filmfest unreels July 4

ON July 4, a festival of movies featuring Fil-American talents will open in the United States. It will raise funds for the campaign for the passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity bill, which will redound to the benefit of Filipinos who fought with American forces in World War II.

The filmfest will showcase some of the Hollywood movies starring Lou Diamond Phillips, Tia Carrere and Rob Schneider, and those produced by Dean Devlin.

To make the festival more comprehensive, its organizers should also try to secure the participation of other Fl-Am talents like Nia Peeples, Billy Crawford, and the perky female lead of "Snow Day."

Billy is about to star in the prequel to "The Exorcist," which will open in the States later this year. If the filmfest can get permission to preview his film, that would be great.

Since most of the movies in the festival aren't new, it would give the showcase a big boost if a 2003 release like Billy's starrer could be shown during the Fil-Am filmfest.

Of the Fil-Am talents working in Hollywood today, the most successful are Devlin and Phillips. Devlin has co-produced blockbusters like "Independence Day" and "The Patriot," while Phillips has established himself as a young lead and character actor, as well as a musical-theater star (he played the King in a Broadway revival of "The King and I").

For her part, Carrere used to appear in films, but has more recently concentrated on her TV career, topbilling her own action-adventure series on the small tube.

In the past couple of years, Schneider has come into his own as a movie comedian, and has chalked up a number of creditable "moderate" hits.

Other Fil-Ams have done well in Hollywood, but not necessarily as stars. They include the wife of Robin Williams, who should be invited to grace the festival's opening rites, hopefully with her husband.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Movies on TV

On HBO: Saturday, May 24 at 9 a.m., "Hostage Negotiator." 12 noon, "Pay It Forward." 5:30 p.m., "Little Women." 9 p.m., "The Majestic." Sunday, May 25 at 6 p.m., "Vertical Limit." 11:35 p.m., "The Tailor of Panama." Monday, May 26 at 11:30 a.m., "Gossip." 6:45 p.m., "Proof of Life." 10:30 p.m., "A.I.—Artificial Intelligence."

Tuesday, May 27 at 10 p.m., "Six Feet Under." Wednesday, May 28 at 9:30 a.m., "Sister Mary Explains It All." 11 a.m., "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein." Thursday, May 29 at 2 p.m., "Starman."

On the Cinemax channel: Saturday, May 24 at 8:45 a.m., "The Time Machine." 3:45 p.m., "Mad About Mambo." Sunday, May 25 at 7 p.m., "Tequila Sunrise." Monday, May 26 at 10 a.m., "Final Destination" 3:30 p.m., "MacArthur." Tuesday, May 27 at 8 a.m., "Boys on the Side." 11:30 a.m., "The Eiger Sanction."

Wednesday, May 28 at 3:30 p.m., "Memphis Belle." 3:15 a.m., "McHale's Navy." Thursday, May 29 at 11:45 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: When Fantasy Becomes Reality." Friday, May 30 at 1:45 p.m., "Cinema Secrets: Oscar Winning Fx."

CARRERE, PHILLIPS AND SCHNEIDER. Doing well in Hollywood.

BONNEVIE. Host of "OPTV," which will be carried soon by The Filipino Channel.

Dina Bonnevie joins "OPTV"

"OPTV (Overseas Pinoy Television," now on its second season, has gotten a boost with the inclusion of Dina Bonnevie as its main host.

The show's May 26 episode (11 p.m. on RPN-9) also has Richard Merk talking to composer Rolly Amoranto in the Middle East. Kata Inocencio presents the heartwarming stories of Pinoy caregivers in Israel. Inah Borra focuses on the Owwa Philhealth medical funds. And Tonette Quiogue talks to Jacqui Magno about her performing stints abroad.

"OPTV" is scripted by Manny Castañeda and directed by Don Escudero. It is telecast every Monday night at 11 p.m. on RPN-9.

More good news: Starting next month, "OPTV" will be aired on The Filipino Channel, and may be viewed in the United States, Australia and the Middle East.

First anniversary

Italianni's at Greenbelt 2 recently celebrated its first anniversary. One of the highlights of the celebration was a special performance by the popular HIraya Men's Choir Manila.

The Hiraya singers feel right at home at Italianni's, their favorite restaurant and regular hangout.

Hiraya was formed in 2000 by John de Veyra of the Philippine Madrigal Singers. The Hiraya singers are young professionals from diverse backgrounds who love to spend their after-office hours singing.

Other Italianni branches are at Alabang Town Center, Glorietta IV, and SM City Bicutan.

'Lambingan'

"Music on the Walls" returns to Intramuros at 7 tonight with "Lambingan," a summer serenade of popular love songs by the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale featuring Ryan Caybyab. New arrangements by Ryan will be premiered.

The repertoire includes excerpts from Rossini's "William Tell Overture," Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" and Rimsky-Korsakov's "Capriccio Espagnol."

"Lambingan" will be held at the Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel in Intramuros. Admission is free.

INTRAMUROS

THE SAN Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra in "Lambingan" summer serenade.

HIRAYA Singers perform at their favorite hangout, Italianni's at Greenbelt 2.

Choral work

Songwriter-poet JST Reyes' 13th choral composition, "Caring for Each Other," will be sung by Village UMM-WSCS choir on May 25 at the 37th anniversary 9 a.m. thanksgiving service of Village United Methodist church in Project 8, QC.

Megacenter events

At 3 p.m. today at Megacenter the Mall in Cabanatuan City, events include the quarter finals of the Wizard's Quest quiz bee, and the Dare to Bare fashion show.

Ms Gay Philippines

The pre-pageant of the 2003 Ms Gay Philippines tilt will be staged at 8 tonight at the Alegria Lounge of Manila Pavilion. The event will be hosted by Ian Valdez, 1986 Ms Gay Philippines.

The grand finals will be held at 8 p.m. on May 25 at Hotel Rembrandt, with Cody Moreno as host. Call 0919-7768525.

'Ang tunay na lalaki' according to Vhong Navarro

By Edmund L. Sicam

COMEDIAN Vhong Navarro has been a regular on ABS-CBN's show "Whattamen" for over a year now. He says that the camaraderie that the audience sees on the TV screen is very similar to how they are off screen as well.

"Maganda ang samahan namin, sobra. Pagpasok ko, nandito pa si Rico (Yan), *siya ang ka*dressing room *ko. Inaasikaso ako, binibigyan ako ng* iced tea, *minamasahe ako, ganoon siya kabait."*

Improvisation

Like most sitcoms, "Whattamen" has a basic script that the actors follow but they are free to improvise and give their ideas specially if they think they can get more laughs. Vhong says that each actor is very generous with his punchlines and gimmicks.

"Pag meron kaming mga ideas, *kami nila* Marvin (Agustin) *at* Dominic (Ochoa), *nagbibigayan kami para sa ikagaganda ng* show. *Walang damutan."*

Among local comedians, Vhong says he admires Dolphy very much but feels that he is already an icon. It would be very difficult for him to reach the heights that Dolphy has reached. Besides, Vhong says that his style of making people laugh is different from the Comedy King's. Vhong says he would like to do something like Jackie Chan's brand of comedy, but without the martial arts.

Vhong feels that comedy has changed: *"Ang mga tao ngayon, kailangan maging bastos ka para matawa sa iyo. Dati, madapa ka, natatawa na. Ngayon, hangga't maaari, duguan ka bago sila matawa sa iyo. Parang presyo ng pagkain, pataas ng pataas."*

Going solo

The new comedian says he aspires to go solo, and also to work with a partner. Later, he says, his dream is to go beyond comedy—"*mag-*action . . . *o kaya* bold star! *Kaya lang, hindi pinalad itong katawan ko!"*

Still, Vhong claims that the opposite sex finds him irresistible. *"Di sa nagbubuhat ako ng sariling bangko, ang mga babae lumalapit. Gusto nila ang katawan ko. Ako, hangga't maaari, para makaiwas po ako, puro trabaho ang pinag-uukulan ko ng pansin!"*

NAVARRO. His dream is to go "beyond comedy."

But when it comes to the third sex, Vhong says they are not attracted to him at all. *"Alam mo, wala talaga. Mahina ang dating ko sa bading. Wala akong* appeal *sa kanila."*

We asked Vhong about his concept of "*tunay na lalaki.*" Is it alright for men to cry? "*Natural lang, okay lang umiyak tayo*—but not in public." He says he hardly sheds tears of joy, except when he learned that he was nominated by the Manunuri for best actor for his role in the movie, "Jologs." "*Naiyak akong sobra! Pero sa* left eye *ko lang. Pag nanalo ako,* right *naman,*" jokes Vhong.

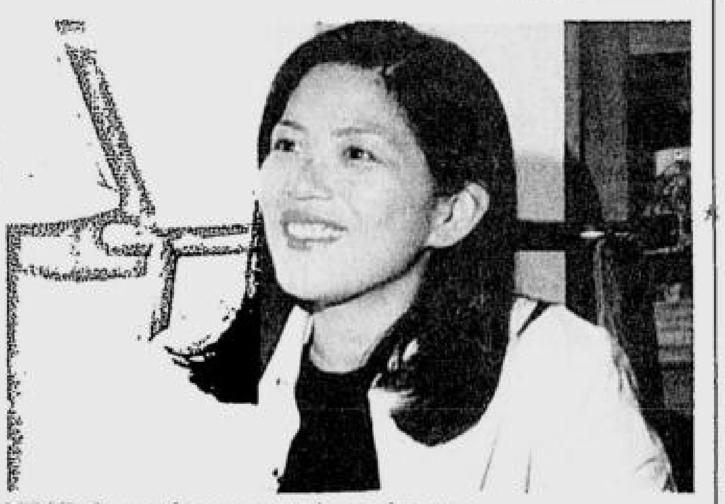
Gentleman

How would he define "*tunay na lalaki*"? Vhong defines it in just one word: Gentleman. He elaborates, "*Mas pinauuna mo, yung babae. Pag brusko ka, barumbado ka, di mo sasabihing lalaking-lalaki yon. Basta, inuuna mo yung mga babae—at mga matatanda, mas* priority *mo kesa sarili mo.*"

What would he do if somebody challenged him to a fight? "*Palaban to! Dati akong sanggano, kinatatakutan sa* school!"

Vhong is currently undergoing the annulment of his marriage. Because of this, he feels that divorce should be legalized in this country.

He believes that one of the reasons why marriages don't work out is that the people marry at an early age. Vhong was 20 years old when he got married. "*Pag mag-aasawa kayo, huwag yung bata,*" he appeals to the youth.



LICAD. Strength, concentration and energy.

Licad's latest recording is London's CD of the Month

By Pablo A. Tariman

CECILE Licad's latest recording of the works of American pianist and composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk under the Naxos label was declared CD of the Month by the London-based Music Web.

Review

The review of Licad's all-Gottschalk recording also branded as inferior the earlier recording of the same pieces by pianists Alan Marks and Philip Martin.

The last recording of Licad declared CD of the Month in London by Classical CD Magazine was her all-Ravel CD consisting of the French works, Le Tombeau de Couperin, Gaspard de la nuit and Sonatine under Music Master label.

It will be remembered that her debut recording of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor and Rhapsody On A Theme by Paganini with the Chicago Symphony under Claudio Abbado in the mid-'80s reached the top of the Billboard charts.

Among the pieces singled out by Music Web as superbly interpreted were Le Banjo, Bamboula, La Savana, The Dying Poet and The Union.

The rave review noticed Licad's tremendous strength, concentration and energy and her great rhythmic bounce.

"Licad's reading is very warm and comforting as she eschews her generally sharp approach to Gottschalk, This tells me that she makes adjustments when appropriate, one of the signs of an exceptional performing artist," a reviewer writes.

Recital

In one recital in New York last year on the first anniversary of the fall of the New York's Twin Towers, Licad played Gottschalk's The Union for her finale, and flag-waving Americans were reduced to tears and cheered her backstage.

Concluded Music Web: "Cecile Licad is now our standard for future Gottschalk recordings. Her exuberance and rhythmic vitality places her in an exalted position. Licad's program is also a winning one, mixing the excitement and poignanacy of Gottschalk compositions."

Licad observed her 42nd birthday last May 11 quietly in her Manhattan apartment with her now 15-year-old son, Otavio.

(Cecile Licad will be heard in homecoming performances at the Philamlife Theater on Aug. 16 and 20, with special performances in Davao City, Tuguegarao City and Bacolod City. Website: amazon.co.uk or amazon.com or call 0918-7376901.)

'Daddy Day Care' is intermittently amusing

By Ben Nuckols

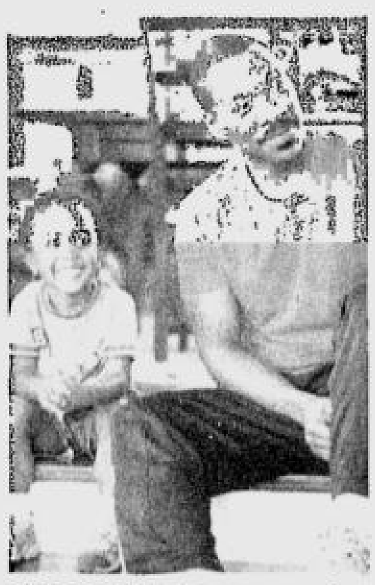
BALTIMORE—Running a day care center is far from an inspired outlet for Eddie Murphy's comic talents, but he's done much worse than "Daddy Day Care," a cheerful and intermittently amusing entry in his library of innocuous family comedies.

Safe day

While targeted strictly at parents and kids looking for a safe day at the multiplex, "Daddy Day Care" has more genuine laughs than most alleged comedies released this year, including "View from the Top," "Head of State" and "Anger Management."

Murphy is Charlie Hinton, who is laid off from a major food corporation when the company decides it's too difficult to market healthy snacks to kids. Though his wife (Regina King) is going back to work as a lawyer, they're still forced to withdraw their four-year-old son, Ben (Khamani Griffin), from the exclusive Chapman Academy.

Charlie is now saddled with child-care duties for the first time, as is his former business partner, Phil (Jeff Garlin of "Curb Your Enthusiasm"). They quickly identify the need for an affordable day-care center where sane parents would agree to leave their kids. And so Daddy Day Care is born.



MURPHY (right) favors comedy that comes from the unexpected.

AP

Ragtag bunch

Their initial group of kids is a predictably ragtag bunch. One's allergic to everything, one has severe separation anxiety, one wears a Flash costume every day. Plus, Ben's too shy and Phil's wild-eyed son isn't potty-trained yet. Mayhem ensues as Charlie and Phil try to keep everyone entertained, succeeding only at the expense of severe damage to Charlie's house.

But "Daddy Day Care" is smart enough to know that comedy comes from the unexpected. You expect to see these diaper dads fail, so it's funnier to see them succeed. This shift in strategy is timed to the reappearance of sublime Steve Zahn as Marvin, a sensitive Trekker who worked in the mail room of Charlie and Phil's company.

Marvin has a way with children, explaining, "I read Dr. Spock's book on child care. It wasn't about 'Star Trek!'" And he quickly determines that a child thought by everyone to be speaking gibberish is actually fluent in Klingon.

As Phil, Charlie and Marvin begin clicking with the kids, Daddy Day Care drains the talent pool from Chapman, where kids count to ten in foreign languages and practice SAT analogies. The imperious headmistress (Angelica Huston, her eyebrows kissing the stratosphere) tries to put them out of business.

Lesser talents

Sadly, Murphy is mostly playing straight man to lesser talents like Garlin. But he has a few inspired moments, as when he impersonates a professional wrestler while dressed as a giant stalk of broccoli. And when he reads a story to his son, a thought crosses your mind that's new to movies, given Murphy's hellraising history both on and off screen: It must be cool to have Eddie Murphy as a dad.

Even when he edges toward blandness, Murphy has a breezy rapport with his supporting cast, and Zahn is usually around to pick up the comic slack. "Daddy Day Care" is an insignificant speck in the careers of these actors and in the minds of its viewers—but it's a funny and well-executed speck.

"Daddy Day Care," a Columbia Pictures release, runs 94 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

AP

Five questions for Paul Reiser

By Alexandra Polier

REISER. Acting onstage for the first time, in a twin bill written and directed by Woody Allen. AP

NEW YORK—Paul Reiser's autobiographical role opposite Helen Hunt in the 1990s TV sitcom "Mad About You" defined the writer-actor for almost a decade.

Co-creator

When the show ended in 1999, Reiser, co-creator of the NBC broadcast network series, decided to take it easy. "I was determined to not do anything for a while," he said.

He did a few projects, including "a movie and two cable movies, but that's just because the people were fun to work with. And I've been writing a lot."

Then "I got this call out of the blue that Woody Allen wants me to be in this play of his," said Reiser, who lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Paula, and their two young children.

"And it was flattering and exciting, but I thought, 'There is no way I am going to go to New York for three months and leave my family!" he said. "I couldn't imagine leaving my little nest."

But "Writer's Block"—two new one-act comedies written by Allen—was an opportunity he couldn't pass up. The off-Broadway show is Allen's debut as a theatrical director—"and who knows if he ever will again?" Reiser said.

Opposite

So he agreed to play the role of a lying, cheating, humorless husband—the opposite of his TV character Paul Buchman—in "Riverside Drive," set on Manhattan's Upper West Side. He co-stars with Kate Blumberg and Skipp Sudduth.

Reiser, 46, says he was a little frightened at first, "but I thought, it's never going to be bad. It's Woody Allen."

"Riverside Drive"—Reiser's professional stage debut—also appealed to him because "there's no pressure on it," he said. "It's a small theater and it's Woody Allen, so I think we're going to be OK."

The second play, "Old Saybrook," takes place in the Connecticut shore community. Also in the cast of "Writer's Block," which runs through June 29 at the Atlantic Theater Company, are Grant Shaud, Clea Lewis and Bebe Neuwirth. Q and A:

How did life change after "Mad About You" ended?

It was quieter. I could go to a movie on a Wednesday if I wanted. But it was already pretty normal by the end. Things weren't so frantic. Everything was running smoothly. But the treadmill pace of it stays in your head, so for months afterward I would still bolt out of bed on Monday morning thinking there was a script to do.

Now it's nice to be able to pick and choose projects. And to be able to stay home and write and be with my kids.

What's it like to work with Woody Allen?

It's fun. It's luxuriously easy. A few hours a day I sit around in a room with Woody Allen making jokes work, that's fun. And it feels like a community theater, it's so low-tech.

No studio

There are no producers, there's no studio—it's just art for the sake of fun.

How does being in "Writer's Block" compare with your "Mad About You" years?

On 'Mad About You,' I always tried to make the characters like me because I thought I would have to work less hard. And it was easy and funny because it was true, because it was based on my marriage. But here it's his play. It's not your stuff.

What are some of your other projects?

I wrote a show which they shot the pilot for here in New York, and I wrote a screenplay that I'm going to be in with Peter Falk that is in pre-production and we should film it at the end of this summer. So I've been busier than I anticipated being, but quietly busy.

Are you a very private person?

I can't even answer that, it's too private. *AP*

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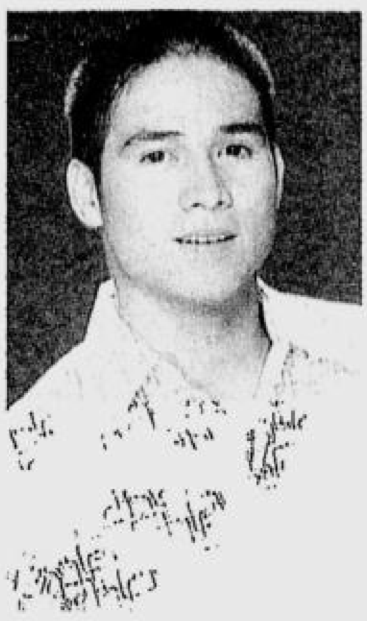
Urian awards honor contrasting filmmaking approaches

SANTOS. Cited for her controlled performance in "Dekada '70."


PASCUAL. Not as versatile as he should be.

By Nestor U. Torre

THE URIAN awards announced last Saturday capped the 2002 film awards season with an appropriate flourish by way of the Manunuri's "surprising" verdicts.

Surprise value

Topping the Urian for surprise value was the joint award for Best Picture to "Dekada '70" and "Mga Munting Tinig." This was unexpected because "Dekada" was a major production that took many months to make, while "Munting Tinig" was a small, low-budget film that was shot in only a few weeks.

Despite this, both films were cited as the best local movies for 2002. A possible interpretation of the twin awards could be: "Dekada" is cited for tackling an important period in the country's political life with the extensive resources of a major studio, while "Munting Tinig" is honored for its ability to dramatize a simple, heartwarming tale that provides much-needed inspiration, despite its limited budget.

In other words, the two films' contrasting approaches are both needed by local movies today, hence the decision for them to share the Urian's Best Picture award.

More controversial

The award for best director is even more controversial because it went to "Munting Tinig's" Gil Portes, rather than to "Dekada's" Chito Roño. This is a potentially confusing decision because, on point of filmmaking skills, Roño's work on "Dekada" was superior to Portes' handling of "Munting Tinig."

So, why did the best director trophy go to Portes? Our hunch is that he got it for his ability to get his dream movie made despite its small budget, and for his knack for securing alternative financing for his indie projects—which, by the way, other filmmakers should try to do.

Innovative

All too often, directors say they can't make their dream movies because they can't get producers to bankroll them. Well, Portes is more innovative and determined, and he should be credited for that. So, this could have been what tipped the award in his favor.

Another unexpected award was Jay Manalo's being hailed as 2002's best lead actor for his performance in "Prosti." No comment on that one, since we didn't see the movie. But we must point out that this is nothing new for the Urian, which has a penchant for boosting relatively new talents and underdogs.

The Best Actress trophy that Vilma Santos won for her performance in "Dekada '70" is another noteworthy decision because, when the film was first shown, even veteran observers rapped Vilma for her relatively "passive," "colorless" and "undramatic" portrayal in the movie.

Husband's dictates

This was because her character, the wife and mother in the movie's central Bartolome family, spent most of the film's running time meekly following her husband's dictates, like most women in the '70s.

Some people took this as a weak thespic stance, and we had to point out in some articles that this wasn't true at all. In fact, given the conventions of the movie's time frame, this "passivity" was an astute artistic decision on Vilma's part, and thoroughly merited by her character and the period in which she lived.

Subtle

In fact, what Vilma did in "Dekada" was more difficult because it was so controlled and subtle. It would have been far easier for her to melodramatically tear up the scenery and act up a storm.

Gratifyingly, by the time the film awards season came around, enough people had seen the light, and Vilma went on to win a phalanx of Best Actress trophies, now including the Urian.

Piolo Pascual's Grand Slam in the Best Supporting Actor category? It was expected, no surprise there. We must point out, however, that the young actor may be a gifted dramatic actor, hence his multiple trophies for his intense and even tormented performance in "Dekada," but he isn't as versatile as he should be.

Too heavy

For instance, in his latest starrer, the lightweight "Till There Was You," his performance was too heavy and taciturn, and he couldn't adjust his dramatic acting style to suit the movie's less morose and turgid requirements.

Piolo should enjoy the trophies he's gotten for "Dekada," but if he wants to become a compleat actor, he should learn how to play other kinds of roles, as well.

REEVE. Comprehensive approach. AFP

Reeve backs paralysis bill

WASHINGTON—Paralyzed film star Christopher Reeve came to Congress on Wednesday last week to push for a new bill that he said would be the first to provide a comprehensive approach to treating and eventually curing paralysis.

Rehabilitation

The $300 million package includes funds for research into paralysis and rehabilitation. It addresses access to treatment and quality of life issues for the two million Americans who have been paralyzed from spinal cord injuries, strokes and diseases such as multiple sclerosis.

Reeve, best known for playing "Superman" in the movies, suffered a life-threatening spinal injury in a horse-riding accident event in May 1995. He now divides his time between directing film projects and working for a foundation that bears his name.

First time

This is the first time he has focused on specific legislation dealing with paralysis.

"This bill could do so much," he said. "It can help with research and also quality of life—jobs, access, recreation." *Reuters*

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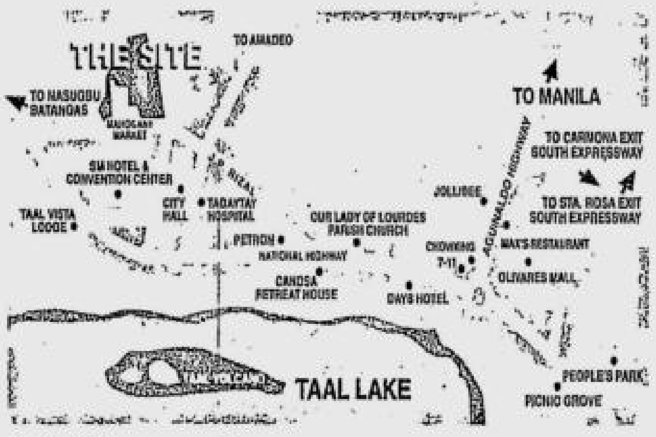

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SATURDAY Special

"NEUTRAL-LOOKING" Michael has created scores of interesting characters for his TV gag shows.

Michael V comes into his own as TV-film comic

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Sunday at 11:30 a.m., we made it a point to watch Inday Badiday's "Heart to Heart" show on Channel 7 because her guest on her hour-long show was Michael V. Through the years, we've been impressed with the growth and range Michael has achieved as a comedian, and we're glad that Inday gave him that in-depth interview and full-blown accolade.

Keen observer

Many people who have worked with Michael on his various TV gag shows agree. They variously describe him as the best young comedian working on TV today, as good as Jay Ilagan, a keen observer who gets his comic material from life, a hard worker, wonderfully versatile, a great impersonator who goes beyond imitating, to the essence and "soul" of the people he mimics—etc.!

He's all that, and more. Inday's long interview informed us, for instance, that Michael V was actually born Beethoven Bunagan—how's that for the answer to a P1 million jackpot question on a game show?

(Where did the Michael V come from? It's a combination of Michael Jackson and Gary Valenciano. —Oh.)

Relatives

The show interviews Michael's—Beethoven's—Bitoy's relatives and boyhood friends, and from them we get the quintessential portrait of the future comedian—a kid who preferred to stay at home rather than going out on gimmicks; who loved to sketch; an honor student who studied at Manila Science High School and majored at Mass Communications at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila; who talked with his friends on tenement rooftops for hours about his plans for the future—

Interestingly, none of those plans involved comedy. He wanted to become a rapper, and he did manage to do that for a time—but he went much further that that.

Standout

What makes Michael V such a standout in the field of comedy? Aside from the strengths mentioned by his friends and co-workers, we think one of the aces up his sleeve is the fact that he looks so "neutral." Not neuter, neutral! Meaning, he can easily adjust his features to look like anybody else—from president Gloria as a no-legs dwarf to Junie Lee, the most inept talk-show host on Philippine television.

In between those two Michael V comic totems are literally scores of other characters, each of them a gem of comedic observation and creation.

It is this seemingly infinite variety to Michael's comic personas that make him fascinating to watch. Before one of his signature characters overstays its welcome on our TV screens, he's moved on to something else.

Driven

It also helps that, despite his charming, laidback performing style, Michael is in fact a driven comedian, working himself ragged to get a new character or a comic routing just right.

And his singing ability has added even greater variety to his comedic oeuvre, making possible the inclusion of musical comedy. song spoofs, humorous translation of lyrics—etc.!

Indeed, there appears to be no end to Michael V's comic creativity and sense of adventure. And on top of everything he's a good husband and father. Enough! No such pluperfect paradigm of talent and virtue could possibly exist—unless his name is Beethoven Bunagan.

AS himself, Michael is a pluperfect paradigm of talent and virtue—named Beethoven Bunagan.

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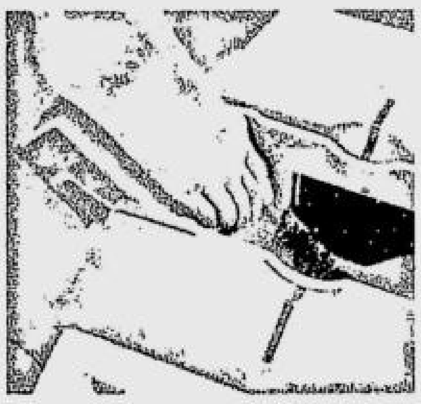
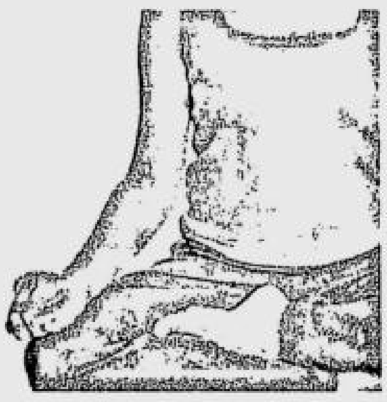
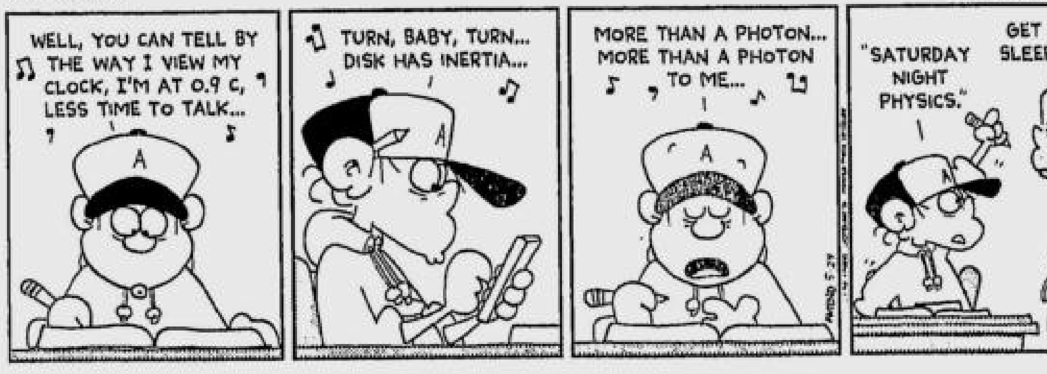
Robinson's Place, Manila	June 13 - 19	SM North Edsa	July 23 - 29	SM Bicutan	August 28 - September 3
Alabang Town Center	June 27 - 29	Glorietta	August 1 - 3	Sta. Lucia East Mall	September 12 - 18





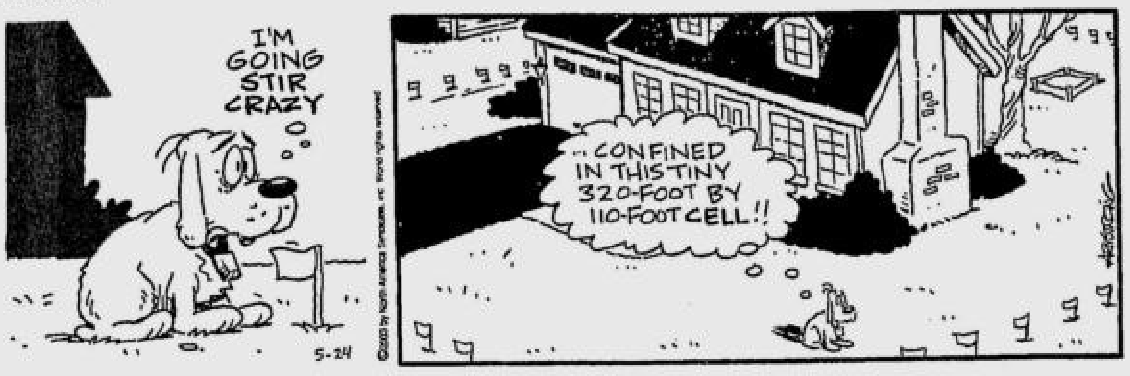
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WELL, YOU CAN TELL BY THE WAY I VIEW MY CLOCK, I'M AT 0.9 c, LESS TIME TO TALK...
TURN, BABY, TURN... DISK HAS INERTIA...
MORE THAN A PHOTON... MORE THAN A PHOTON TO ME...
"SATURDAY NIGHT PHYSICS."
GET SOME SLEEP, SON.

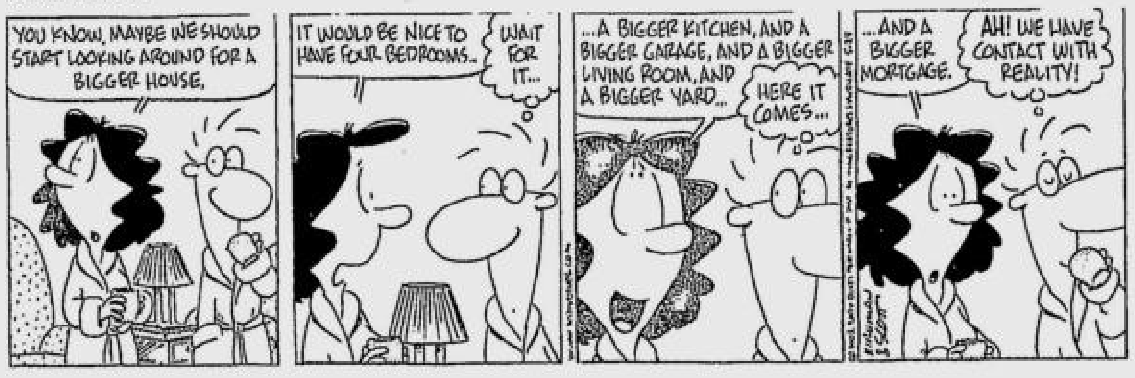
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M GOING STIR CRAZY
...CONFINED IN THIS TINY 320-FOOT BY 110-FOOT CELL!!
5-24

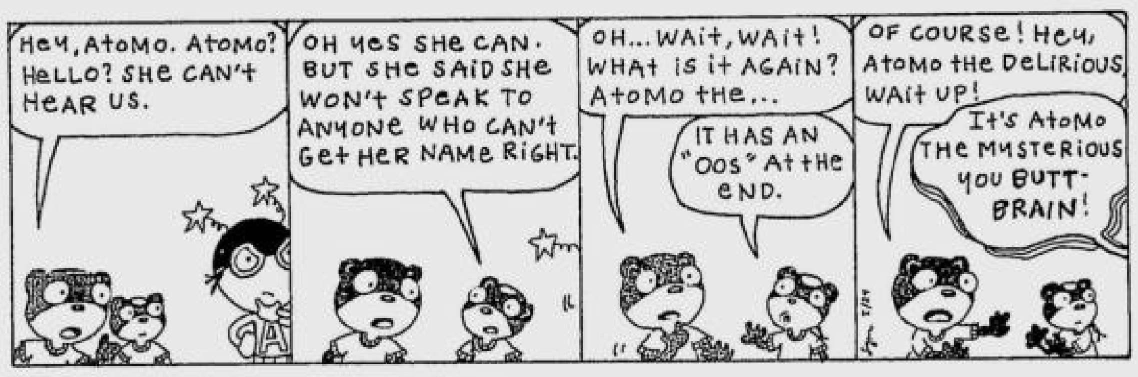
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU KNOW, MAYBE WE SHOULD START LOOKING AROUND FOR A BIGGER HOUSE.
IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE FOUR BEDROOMS...
WAIT FOR IT...
...A BIGGER KITCHEN, AND A BIGGER GARAGE, AND A BIGGER LIVING ROOM, AND A BIGGER YARD...
HERE IT COMES...
...AND A BIGGER MORTGAGE.
AH! WE HAVE CONTACT WITH REALITY!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Atomo. Atomo? Hello? She can't hear us.
Oh yes she can. But she said she won't speak to anyone who can't get her name right.
Oh... wait, wait! What is it again? Atomo the...
It has an "oos" at the end.
Of course! Hey, Atomo the Delirious, wait up!
It's Atomo the Mysterious you butt-brain!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a unique individual. You have a strong social conscience and believe in humanitarian values. When you speak, you speak your mind. Your ability to express yourself inspires others. You have opinions on many subjects. Learn to use your persuasive skills in a positive, beneficial manner. Expect more solitude this year to discover something important.

Birthdate of: George Washington Carver, inventor/scientist; Bob Dylan, singer/musician; Priscilla Presley, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Relationships can be strained today because you might have difficulties with restrictions you feel are placed on you. Could others quite possibly feel that you are placing restrictions on them? Think about it.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): When dealing with authority figures (including parents) today, remember the advice of Proverbs: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel unusually rebellious today. Freedom is an important issue for you. However, since we're all in this Big Soup together, nobody is entirely free.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Expect a few surprises with shared possessions and other people's money. It's not worth being miserable about anything that you have no power to change.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Today is subject to sudden upsets of behavior either from yourself or from those around you. Keep a level head. Anger serves no purpose other than to make everybody miserable.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): The best way to approach today is simply to expect the unexpected. This is impossible, I know. However, every now and then life throws us a curveball.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Be very patient with children today. Part of growing up is looking for opportunities to define your power and express your individuality. That's all that's happening, and it's not a bad thing.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Unexpected romance might come your way today. If it does, this person will be unusual, out of the ordinary and quite possibly from a different background or culture than you.

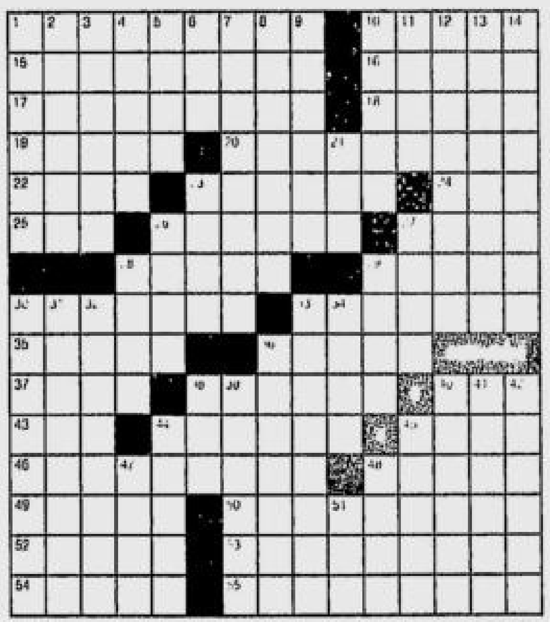
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Domestic upsets are possible today. People are accident-prone because of haste and tense feelings. Try to be part of the solution, not the problem.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be very careful driving or walking today. It's not dangerous out there; however, your own erratic, impulsive behavior could make you careless or cause you to overlook important details.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might feel bothered today because you want to make changes in your life and you feel blocked by someone or something. Don't push the river. Wait for a better time. (Like tomorrow.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're restless with your everyday routine today. You feel you need air! You might want to express yourself in a way you never have done before.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Ed Voile
Gillette, WY

5/24/03

ACROSS
1 "Alice in Wonderland" character
10 Bite
15 Too willing
16 More uncommon
17 Hopeless outlook
18 Wrathful
19 Coastal recess
20 Grooming rituals
22 Instituted legal proceedings
23 Finnish baths
24 Valuable vein
25 Magic spell
26 Minibus
27 Julia Roberts movie, "__ Brockovich"
28 King of Judea
29 Spark producer
30 Catalog customer
33 Literary add-ons
35 Animated Eddie Murphy movie
36 Baker or Loos
37 __ du jour
38 Hold your __!
40 Wok sauce
43 Offbeat
44 Cleans up, as files
45 Go up against
46 Offer one's apologies
48 Coup group
49 Consume completely
50 Long snakes
52 About
53 Lenient
54 Possible mirages
55 Quarter-moon occurrences

DOWN
1 Fashionable
2 Line of inquiry
3 Automatic reaction
4 Nicene, for example
5 Warm up
6 Boater or bowler
7 Rabble-rouser
8 Echo
9 Royalty fur
10 Calls out
11 Male red deer
12 Sacred story set to music
13 Machine stamping
14 Gifts
21 Set (down)
23 King's address
26 Abrupt pull
27 Singer Fitzgerald
28 Dickens hypocrite
29 Fills a space
30 Veal-in-wine dish
31 Zimbabwe, once
32 Menial workers
33 Baja California seaport
34 Dessert pastries
36 WWI battle site
38 "Ben __"
39 Make a minister
40 Smoothed
41 Antiknock rating word
42 Leavening agents
44 Dads
45 Mold, mildew and smut
47 Brownish purple
48 Unexpected shock
51 Small drinking vessel

Friday's Puzzle Solved

A	F	L	A	T		D	O	N	A	R		B	I	G
T	O	O	T	H		A	D	E	L	E		O	D	E
M	R	S	F	E	Z	Z	I	W	I	G		B	I	N
				P	E	E	N			A	S	C	O	T
A	D	J	O	I	N	S		S	T	U	A	R	T	S
R	I	A	L	T	O		E	N	I	G	M	A		
M	A	C	E	S		C	R	A	N	E		I	N	T
E	N	O	S		L	A	R	R	Y		S	C	O	W
D	A	B		G	I	J	O	E		T	A	H	O	E
		M	U	R	M	U	R		M	A	R	I	N	E
S	T	A	T	I	O	N		M	U	T	A	T	E	D
C	A	R	E	D			S	E	N	T				
A	L	L		D	I	C	K	W	I	L	K	I	N	S
L	I	E		E	T	H	E	L		E	E	R	I	E
P	A	Y		R	E	A	P	S		S	W	E	A	R

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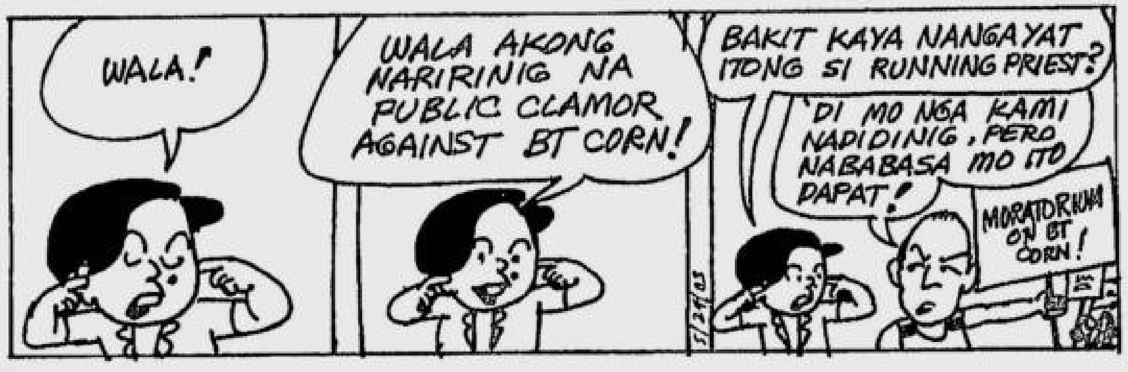
5/24/03

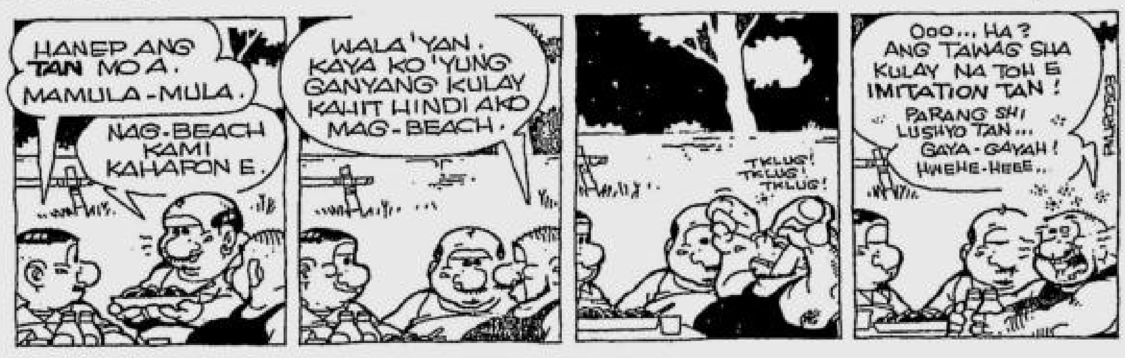
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WALA!
WALA AKONG NARIRINIG NA PUBLIC CLAMOR AGAINST BT CORN!
BAKIT KAYA NANGAYAT ITONG SI RUNNING PRIEST?
'DI MO NGA KAMI NAPIDINIG, PERO NABABASA MO ITO DAPAT!
MORATORIUM ON BT CORN!

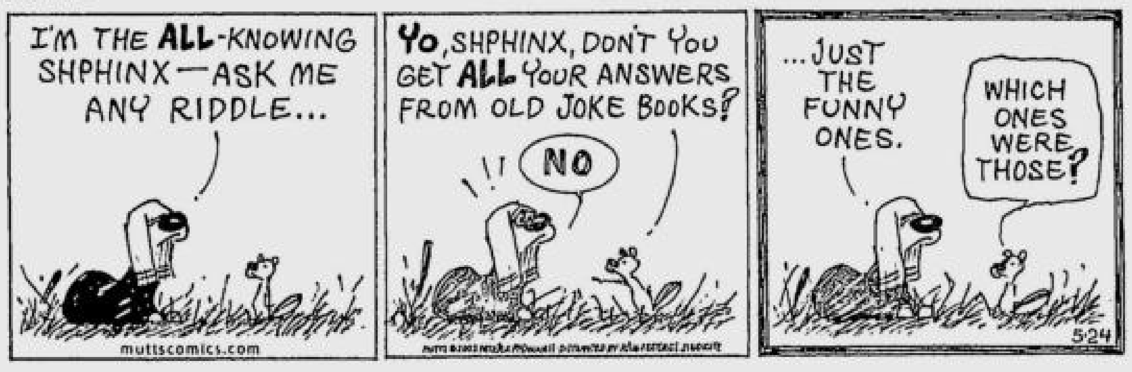
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HANEP ANG TAN MO A. MAMULA-MULA.
NAG-BEACH KAMI KAHAPON E.
WALA 'YAN. KAYA KO 'YUNG GANYANG KULAY KAHIT HINDI AKO MAG-BEACH.
TKLUG! TKLUG! TKLUG!
OOO... HA? ANG TAWAG SHA KULAY NA TOH E IMITATION TAN!
PARANG SHI LUSHYO TAN... GAYA-GAYAH! HWEHE-HEEE..

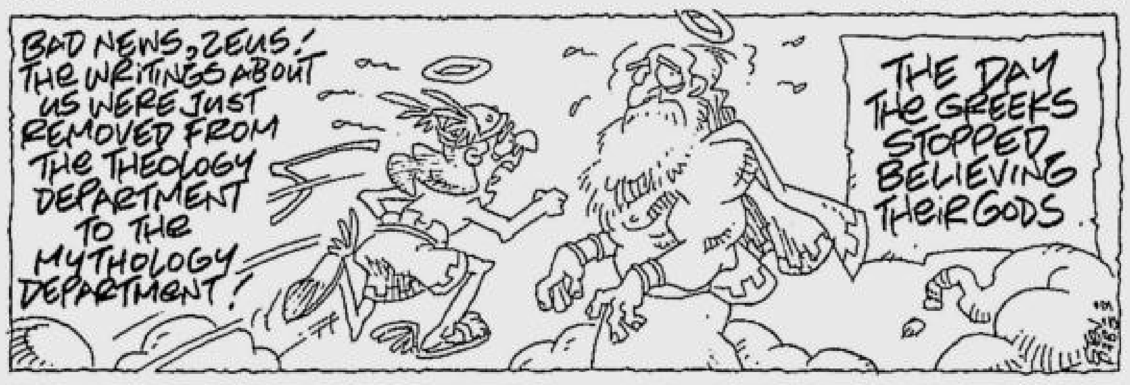
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M THE ALL-KNOWING SHPHINX—ASK ME ANY RIDDLE...
YO, SHPHINX, DON'T YOU GET ALL YOUR ANSWERS FROM OLD JOKE BOOKS?
NO
...JUST THE FUNNY ONES.
WHICH ONES WERE THOSE?
muttscomics.com
5-24

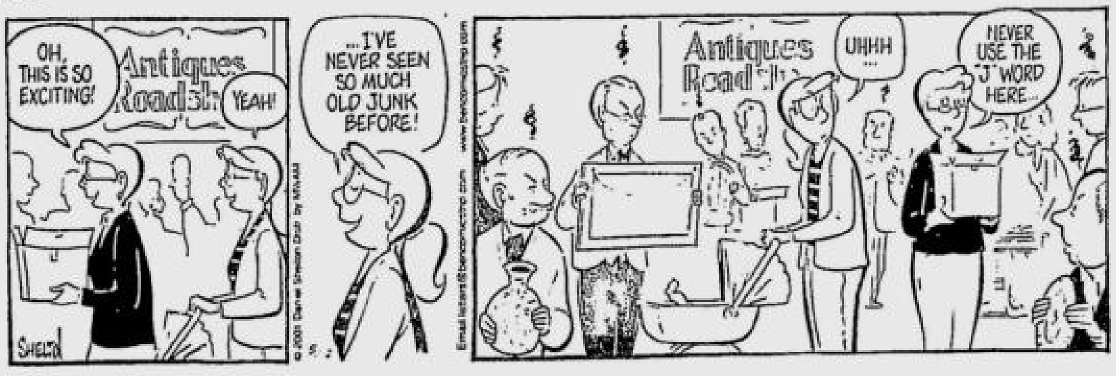
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BAD NEWS, ZEUS! THE WRITINGS ABOUT US WERE JUST REMOVED FROM THE THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT TO THE MYTHOLOGY DEPARTMENT!
THE DAY THE GREEKS STOPPED BELIEVING THEIR GODS.

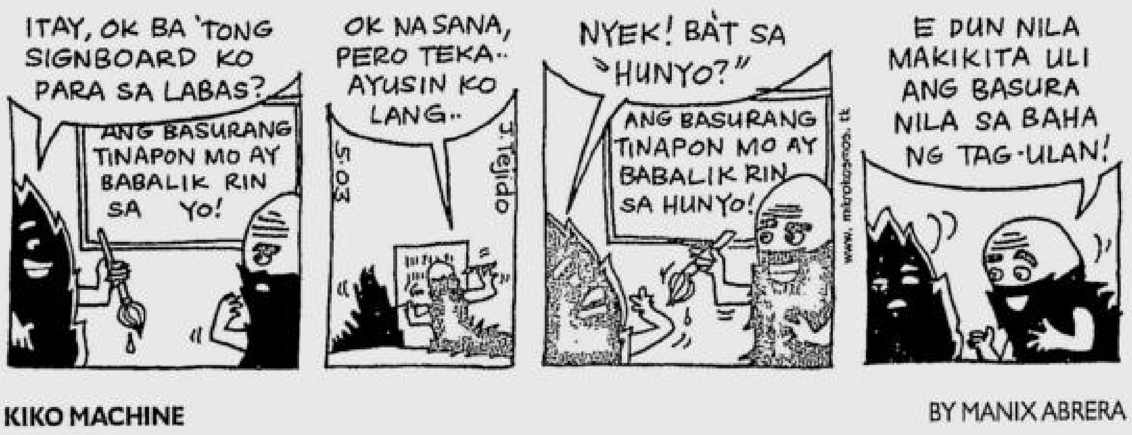
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


OH, THIS IS SO EXCITING!
Antiques Roadsh
YEAH!
...I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MUCH OLD JUNK BEFORE!
UHHH ...
NEVER USE THE "J" WORD HERE...

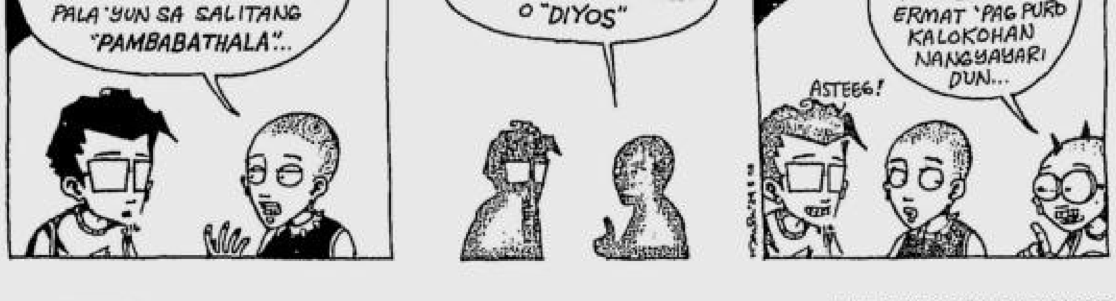
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ITAY, OK BA 'TONG SIGNBOARD KO PARA SA LABAS?
ANG BASURANG TINAPON MO AY BABALIK RIN SA YO!
OK NA SANA, PERO TEKA.. AYUSIN KO LANG..
NYEK! BAT SA "HUNYO?"
ANG BASURANG TINAPON MO AY BABALIK RIN SA HUNYO!
E DUN NILA MAKIKITA ULI ANG BASURA NILA SA BAHA NG TAG-ULAN!

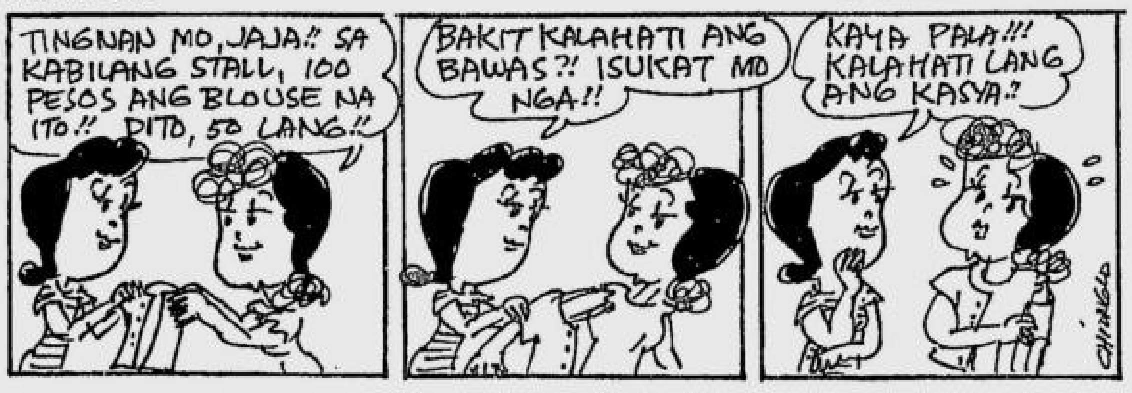
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'DI BA 'YUNG SALITANG "PAMAHALAAN" E GALING SA "PAMAMAHALA"? GALING PA PALA 'YUN SA SALITANG "PAMBABATHALA"...
...AT ANG SALITANG-UGAT NUN AY "BATHALA" O "DIYOS"
KAYA PALA PURO "DYUSKOPO!" NASASABI NI ERMAT 'PAG PURO KALOKOHAN NANGYAYARI DUN...
ASTEEG!

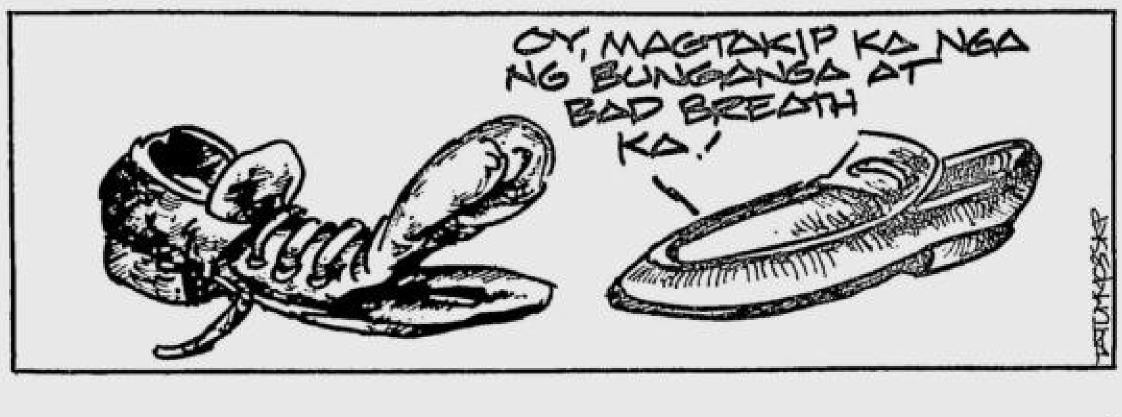
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TINGNAN MO, JAJA!! SA KABILANG STALL, 100 PESOS ANG BLOUSE NA ITO!! DITO, 50 LANG!!
BAKIT KALAHATI ANG BAWAS?! ISUKAT MO NGA!!
KAYA PALA!!! KALAHATI LANG ANG KASYA.?

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, MAGTAKIP KA NGA NG BUNGANGA AT BAD BREATH KA!

'Meteor Garden' combines Pinoy penchant for schmaltzy teen romp and boy band adulation

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Shana Mendoza of Quezon City and Jane Juarez of Baguio: "I enjoy watching 'Meteor Garden' and its charismatic leads. Please feature them in your column. How did the show come about?"

As infectious as the SARS virus that has gripped the Asian region's imagination in the past months, the Taiwan-produced series, "Meteor Garden," has also taken the Philippines by storm.

Elite school

Based on a popular Japanese comic book, "Hana Yori Dango" (literally translated as "Men are better than flowers"), it is about a girl, Shan Cai (played by pop star Barbie Xu), sent by her middle-class family to an elite school for the filthy rich.

Soon after, she encounters Ying De University's four good-looking bullies and clashes with them. With Pinoy telenovela-like plot manipulations, which include a love triangle between the female protagonist and two (Dao Ming Shi and Hua Zhe Lei, portrayed by Jerry Yen and Vic Zhou, respectively) of the four boys, the series has captured Asia's imagination.

Meteor rain

Browsing through the story of "Meteor Garden," which posits that lovers who witness a meteor rain will end up together, it's easy to understand its popularity among the teen-age and yuppy set.

Consider these: the story has a love triangle involving popular jocks fighting over a poor but kind-hearted girl. That alone can make a lot of young girls' hearts flutter, not unlike the Piolo-Juday and Kristine-Jericho potboilers.

But its story arc also has kidnapping, blackmail, an "almost rape" scene and forced marriage in it. And it doesn't hurt that the four bullies are portrayed by Taiwan's top boy band, Flower Four, F4 to its loyal followers.

The series debuted in Taiwan in April 2002 and ran for nine months, and has since made Asian superstars out of the quartet, consisting of Jerry Yen, Vic Zhou, Ken Zhu and Vanness Wu. The group's debut album, "Meteor Rain," sold over 180,000 in Taiwan alone. Their second collection, "Fantasy 4ever" was also a top-seller.

Vic Zhou came out with his 10-track solo hit album, "Make A Wish," while Vanness Wu's "Body Will Sing" was released recently. It includes the carrier single, "My Friend" and a cover of "Can't Help Falling in Love."

BARBIE XU (center) with her F4 co-stars.

Sequel

The sequel to "Meteor Garden" features in its story, among others, a marriage proposal, a car crash in a foreign land, amnesia, and a bride being stood up at the altar. The story gets even more convoluted. The new series debuted in February this year.

Capsule profiles: Jerry Yen (Dao Ming Shi on the series), the most popular of the group, was born on Jan. 1, 1977 in Taiwan. Nickname: Nick Baolong. Height: 180 cm, Weight: 72 kg, Religion: Buddhism. Languages spoken: Mandarin, Fookien, Taiwanese. He collects spectacles, loves to dance and plays basketball. Ideal girl: tall, beautiful, clever, good conversationalist. Trivia: He won a model search sponsored by a magazine in 1998 and has appeared in numerous commercials and ads.

Vic Zhou or Vic Chow (Hua Zhe Lei) is the youngest (born June 9, 1981 in Taiwan). Height: 180 cm, Weight: 66 kg, He collects photos and loves to jog. Religion: Buddhism. Favorite artist: Andy Lau (the guy Sharon Cuneta did a duet with. Remember, "Where's the Good in Goodbye"?) Ideal girl: "Someone who is not so pretty so I won't have to fight over her." Trivia: He was an engineering student at a technical institute in Taiwan before he was discovered. He accompanied a friend to audition for "Meteor Garden" but he got the role instead.

Collects CDs

Ken Zhu or Ken Chu (Xi Men) was born on June 15, 1978. Height: 180 cm, Weight: 73 kg, Religion: Buddhism. He speaks Mandarin, English and Cantonese. He loves to swim, surf the net, collect CDs. Favorite singer: John Lennon. Ideal girl: Tall, beautiful, stylish. Trivia: He lived in Singapore for eight years, used to work as a cook and doesn't eat beef. He was discovered while he was working in a Japanese BBQ restaurant. He has seven (!) piercings in his body: four in his ears, and one each in his nose, belly button and nipple. Ouch!

Vanness Wu (Mei Zhuo) was born on Aug. 7, 1978 in the United States. Height: 180 cm, Weight: 72 kg, Religion: Christian. Favorite actors: Mel Gibson and Stephanie Seymour. He enjoys jogging, playing basketball and bodybuilding. Ideal girl: "Someone who's fun to be with." Trivia: He is said to be the best singer and dancer of the lot.

Road

He was born and raised in the US, and was named after the road his family lived on. He has been in the music business since age 13 and was a member of another band, LA Boyz, before he joined F4. He was in a male pageant when his "Meteor Garden" producer spotted him and asked him to audition for the show.

Updates: Van is currently filming a movie in Korea. In June, Ken's first solo album and movie will be released. Vic and Ken's new TV series will start telecasting in July. Jerry will record his first solo album in August. In September, F4 will record its third album before the boys start shooting a movie for a December release.

For NBC programmers, the focus is on comedy

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—NBC programmers are putting the finishing touches on what may be their most crucial primetime lineup in a decade, seeking new hit comedies as veterans "Friends" and "Frasier" take their victory laps.

Pilots

NBC's hopes for sitcom salvation appear to hinge on about half dozen pilots, including an American version of a BBC comedy known as the British "Friends" as well as star vehicles for Heather Locklear and Whoopi Goldberg.

All the broadcast networks will unveil their fall 2003 schedules next week as they kick off their "upfront" sales of commercial time to advertisers. NBC, a unit of General Electric Co., goes first with its presentation next Monday.

For NBC, the upcoming season will mark a last chance to find new breakout comedy hits to shore up its long-dominant "Must-See TV" lineup before the six coffee-gulping pals of "Friends" leave the airwaves.

What goes on the air in September will represent the fruit of the first TV show development cycle that NBC Entertainment president Jeff Zucker has presided over since assuming full control over the network's West Coast operations last May.

The departure of "Friends" at the end of the 2003-2004 season next May will leave a gaping hole in NBC's formidable Thursday night schedule, where it has reigned as the network's comic centerpiece since "Seinfeld" left the airwaves in 1998.

"It's as crucial as it's ever been that they find some kind of galvanizing comedy hit that's going to create the instant stars and create the buzz that 'Friends' did," TV Guide magazine's chief critic Matt Roush told Reuters.

NBC says it expects several more seasons of "ER," which remains a potent ratings force though it has been supplanted by "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" on CBS as TV's top drama. Meanwhile. the freshman comedy "Good Morning, Miami" has not entirely lived up to expectations and is doubtful for renewal.

NBC faces an even bigger challenge in its Tuesday night lineup, where "Frasier" has faded in the ratings as it heads into its 11th and final season, onetime hit "Just Shoot Me" has been shelved and "Watching Ellie" is skating on thin ice.

All this is happening as NBC faces the prospect of losing its crown as the No. 1 network on US television both in terms of overall viewership and over its target audience of adults under age 50, the demographic most prized by advertisers.

Reality hits

CBS is expected to finish this season as No. 1 in total viewers, while the Fox network, is nipping at NBC's heels in the battle for adults 18 to 49, thanks to reality hits "Joe Millionaire" and "American Idol." NBC will be working hard to develop at least one new reality hit of its own this summer, launching seven new unscripted series during the warm-weather months.

Currently, its only big success in the reality arena has been the gross-out stunt show "Fear Factor." Comedy remains the network's fall focus. Nearly all the sitcom contenders getting the buzz come with household names and familiar faces—and most are distinctly more family oriented than either "Friends" or "Frasier."

One notable exception is "Coupling," adapted from a British show of the same name, about six hip thirty-something friends on the make in a big city (sound familiar?). But NBC execs are tight-lipped about reported talks with "Friends" producers about a possible spinoff with "Friends" co-star Matt LeBlanc.

Perhaps the biggest example of star power among NBC's prospective comedies is a show starring Oscar-winner Whoopi Goldberg, starring as ex-diva running a hotel.

In a more family vein, John Larroquette ("Night Court," "The John Larroquette Show") would star with Emmy winner Christine Baranski ("Cybill," "Chicago") in "Happy Family." And Heather Locklear ("Spin City") is poised for an NBC pickup as a divorcee looking to rekindle love with her ex-spouse. *Reuters*

"FRIENDS." Will bow out of the TV screen at the end of the 2003-2004 season.

'Reality' TV loses luster with US networks

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—There's a new reality for network television: good, old-fashioned fiction is back in style.

Newfound aversion

Responding to advertisers' newfound aversion to unscripted programming, the networks are going back to basics with a fall slate of new and returning shows heavy on traditional sitcoms and dramas and decidedly light on the "reality" genre.

The resurgence of scripted series is good news for Hollywood writers and actors. But viewers won't be bidding a final farewell just yet to insect-eating, hard-bodied contestants vying for cash, instant fame and desirable mates.

The Big Four broadcasters are bringing back a handful of blue-chip reality hits this fall—CBS's "Survivor," ABC's "The Bachelor," NBC's "Fear Factor," and "Joe Millionaire" on Fox. NBC even plans to launch a new one, "The Apprentice," featuring real estate mogul Donald Trump, later in the season.

Fresh offering

Likewise, Fox has a fresh reality offering planned for mid-season, the interactive entertainment show "Banzai." Not surprisingly, Fox, whose ratings fortunes were transformed from dismal to dazzling thanks largely to "Joe Millionaire" and "American Idol," is devoting the largest share of its fall lineup to unscripted series, four hours in all, including the return of "Cops" and "America's Most Wanted." Reality TV also will remain alive and well this summer, as broadcasters opt for cheap, original programming to "keep the lights on" during a period once given over entirely to reruns.

The idea is to stem further viewer defections to cable TV.

Indeed, NBC is planning to air at least 10 unscripted programs this summer, using the warm-weather schedule as an incubator for potential reality hits, hoping one or two could spark high enough ratings to return for the regular TV season.

Strategy

That strategy worked like a charm for some of TV's greatest unscripted success stories, starting with "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and "Survivor." Of course, summertime shows are not the only breeding ground for fall and winter shows. Any number of concepts pumped into development in recent months—the "Real Beverly Hillbillies" for example—could tempt networks scrambling at mid-season for a quick fix to replace a scripted flop.

But broadcast executives well know that staged reality shows can cut both ways.

Backlash

The recent backlash against prime time's flood of contest and courtship shows was triggered in part by a reality binge that backfired at ABC. Encouraged by the instant popularity of "The Bachelor" this season, the Walt Disney Co.-owned network pressed its luck with a string of reality misfires like "Are You Hot?" and "I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here!"

Some media buyers complained about not getting what they paid for when purchasing advertising time in advance during last year's "upfront" sales market. "What we bought in the upfront is not what we ended up with, Peggy Green, president of national broadcast for Zenith Media, said at a conference of advertisers earlier this month.

"If that is what happens this year, the upfront may have to be revisited." A chastened ABC Entertainment chairman Lloyd Braun told reporters last week that he had learned his lesson, and he outlined a more moderate future role for reality.

"Having a reality-laden network is not great business," Braun said.

Aside from the issue of ratings, some advertisers have simply been uneasy about associating their products with the mix of sex and voyeurism that fuels much of the reality genre. *Reuters*

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REEVES. topbills "Matrix Reloaded." REUTERS

CRUZ. Star of "Fanfan La Tulipe." REUTERS

Stargazers descend in droves on Cannes

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—For the ladies, the main attraction this year is Keanu Reeves. For the men, Penelope Cruz is the big draw.

And they're ready to do whatever it takes to catch sight of them—fans from all over the world descend on Cannes every year and happily spend days leaning up against metal crush barriers just for a 10-second glimpse of their favorite star ascending the red-carpeted stairway.

Kiss

Boston boutique owner Evelyn Bakon-Wheeler crossed the Atlantic to get a peep at Keanu Reeves, in town for the world launch day of "Matrix Reloaded." "My dream would be a kiss from Keanu," she told Reuters. "My friends said they were afraid of traveling over from the United States but I said hey—it's worth it for Keanu."

Friendships blossom outside the Palais des Festivals where the most devoted fans even take their annual summer holidays, camping out all day with their collapsible garden chairs.

For some it is their first time. "I am a festival virgin but the atmosphere here is great," said Yolyn Sim from Singapore.

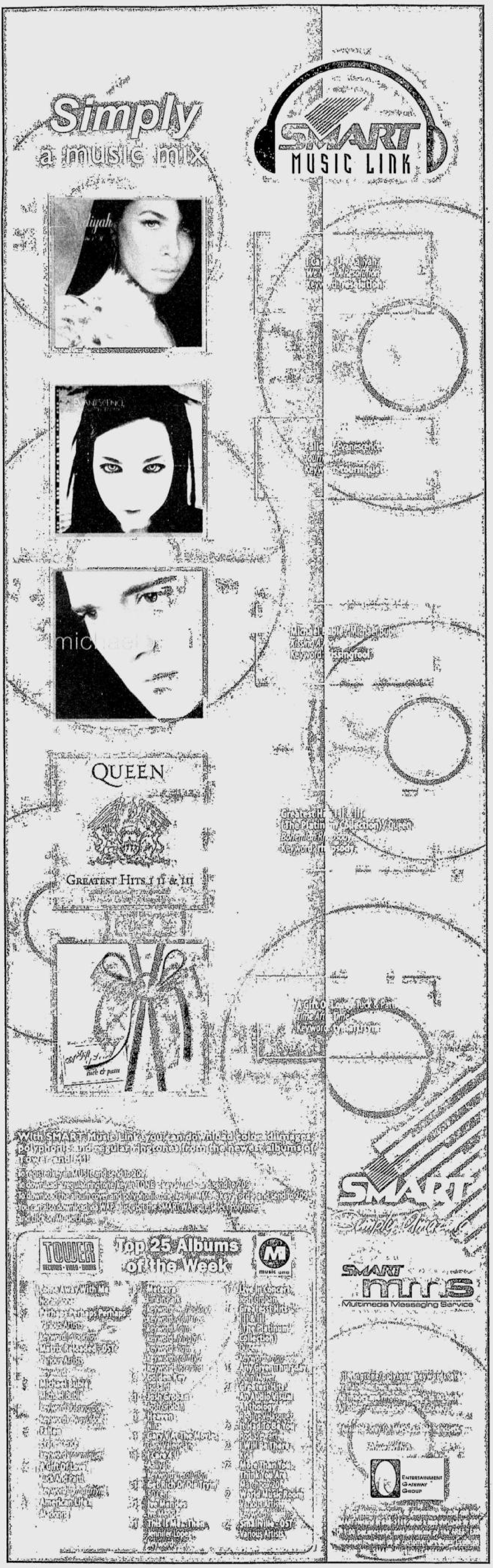
Ideal

"My ideal would be to meet Tom Cruise or Colin Firth." She shares a dormitory room at a Cannes hostel with Australian Eve Parsons, a diehard fan.

"It's like an addiction for me," she confessed. "This year my main reason for coming to Cannes was to see Meg Ryan who is on the film jury this time. I think Hugh Grant or Jude Law would be my ideal date if I got to choose."

Ardent French fan Agnes Favier said: "I take my holidays to see this. My dream would be for Keanu Reeves to give me a kiss." The stargazers eagerly clutch their disposable cameras and wave their autograph books as the limousines sweep up to disgorge legions of actors outside the Palais des Festivals.

Male fans were given plenty to cheer on opening night when Spanish actress Penelope Cruz arrived for the premiere of the French costume drama "Fanfan La Tulipe." But the stargazers were delivered one crushing blow—her beau, Hollywood superstar Tom Cruise, had stayed at home. *AP*



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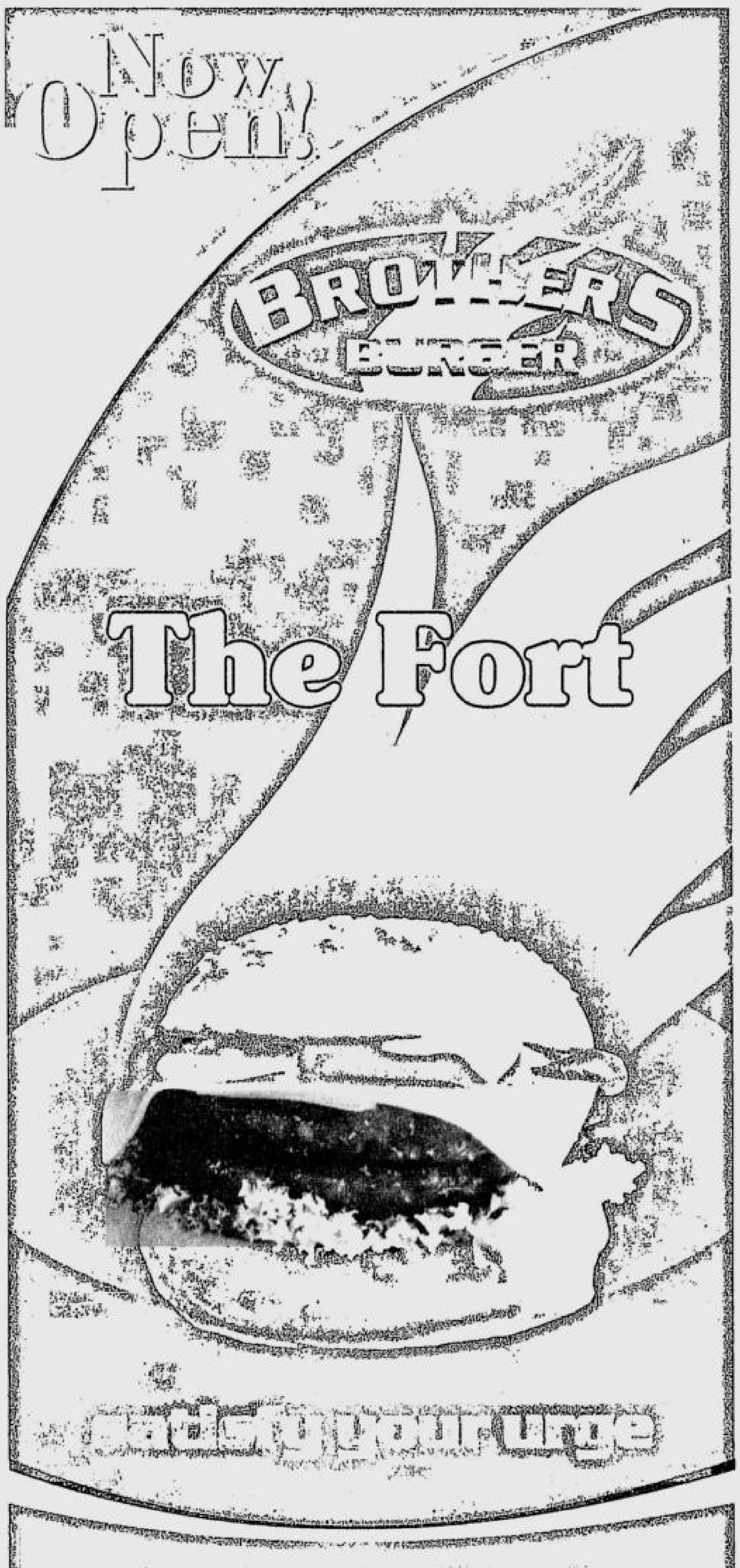

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SATURDAY *Special*

Oprah signs up for two more seasons

WINFREY. America's favorite TV personality.

CHICAGO—Talk show queen Oprah Winfrey has signed up to host her ratings-topping show for another two seasons, her production company said Monday.

Contrast

The billionaire television personality has signed a contract with her distributors King World Productions that will keep her show on the air through the end of the 2008 television season, though with fewer shows per season, Harpo Productions said in a statement.

Winfrey will anchor 130 shows per season, down from 145 in the 2002/3 and 2003/4 seasons.

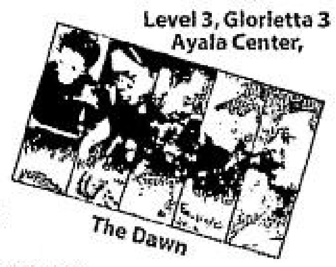
"It's fulfilling being able to do this kind of television," said Winfrey in a statement, "and I believe continuing to have a voice and a platform to speak to the world is still the right thing to do."

17th season

The daytime women-oriented talk show is currently in its 17th season, and has ranked No. 1 among all talk shows for the past 17 seasons and the last 66 consecutive sweep periods, according to King World, a division of CBS Enterprises.

The show, which has had an unbroken television run since it first debuted in 1986, reaches 99 percent of US television households and is syndicated to another 105 countries worldwide.

Winfrey, also an Oscar-nominated actress, producer and magazine publisher, recently recaptured the position of America's favorite TV personality after a hiatus of three years, according to a Harris poll of 2,201 people. *AFP*



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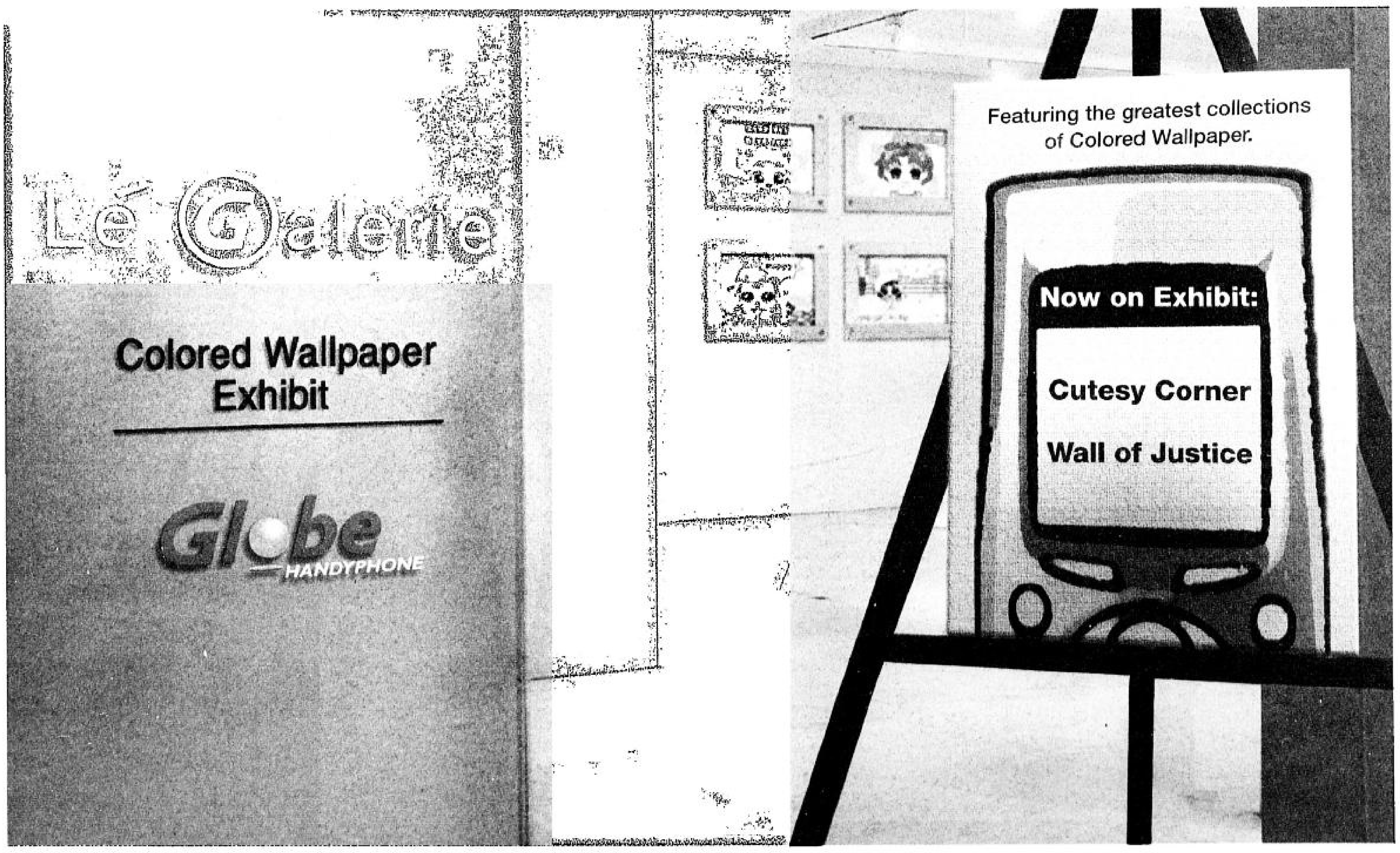
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Ludivine Sagnier has two starring roles in films

By Angela Doland

CANNES, France—With two lead roles in the main competition at the Cannes Film Festival, 23-year-old Ludivine Sagnier is already living an actress' dream.

French actress

In Francois Ozon's "Swimming Pool," the golden-haired French actress plays a free-spirited, free-loving young woman who inspires an uptight British detective novelist (Charlotte Rampling) to loosen up.

She's also starring in the title role of Claude Miller's "La Petite Lili," as an actress who becomes involved with an older director.

Up to now, Sagnier has mostly appeared in supporting roles. When she heard both her new films were selected for Cannes, she worried at first about the pressure.

Sagnier describes her reaction like something out of a cartoon.

"It was as if a huge piano had fallen on my head," she said Monday. "I wondered, 'How can I deal with this?' Then I calmed down. It's quite a rare event in one actress' life."

Debut

With "Swimming Pool," the bubbly, raspy-voiced Sagnier makes her debut in an English-language movie. In an upcoming film, P.J. Hogan's "Peter Pan," she plays Tinkerbell. English-language lines weren't a problem: The pixie doesn't talk.

"That doesn't mean I have no work to do," she said in an interview in English. "I'm really clownish in that part."

She's been testing her Tinkerbell facial expressions on her sister's baby to see what gets a laugh.

Sagnier, who studied acting as a child, had one of her first big roles in Ozon's 2000 film "Water Drops on Burning Rocks," set in 1970s Germany. She plays a girl whose boyfriend has left her for an older man. Then she too falls under the man's charm.

Since then, she's been a muse for Ozon, one of France's hottest young directors. He cast her as a tomboy in "8 Women," a campy murder mystery set in a snowed-in chateau. Her co-stars were some of France's most beloved actresses, including Catherine Deneuve, Fanny Ardant, Isabelle Huppert and Emmanuelle Beart.

With "Swimming Pool," Ozon said: "I wanted to spoil her with a sexy new role."

Stylish thriller

The new Ozon movie is a stylish thriller set in a villa in Provence. It focuses on the relationship between a writer vacationing in her publisher's house, and the publisher's daughter, who shows up unexpectedly.

While Sagnier plays an earthy but innocent temptress in "La Petite Lili," her character in "Swimming Pool" is a hedonist: She sunbathes topless, stocks the refrigerator with foie gras and white wine, and brings home a different man every night.

She's a foil to the stuffy writer played by Rampling—who won raves and renewed her career by playing a woman unable to cope with her husband's disappearance in Ozon's "Under the Sand."

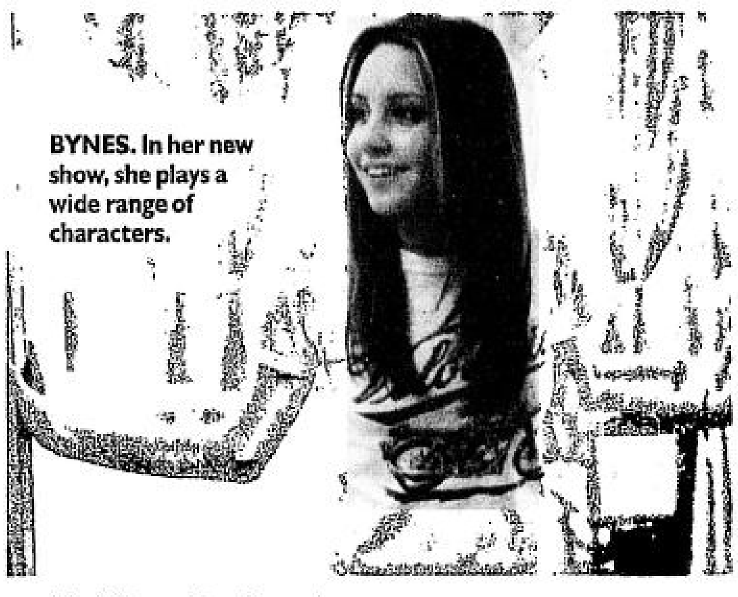
Sagnier says she owes much of her career to Ozon and his faith in the transformations she could enact.

"We are really close. I was like his little sister," she said. "He could see me as a German girl from the 70s, as a tomboy, as a sexy girl from the south. I've been raw material for him." *AP*

SAGNIER, left, with co-star Charlotte Rampling. REUTERS

Adolescent stars play it cool on TV

By Mona Gonzalez



BYNES. In her new show, she plays a wide range of characters.

"WHO would you rather be—Amanda or Lizzie Maguire?" I asked my 12-year-old daughter the other day. Amanda Bynes seems to be the latest "it" adolescent girl. On the Nickelodeon channel, she has her own program, "The Amanda Show."

Comedy skits

"The Amanda Show" has a format similar to "Mixed Nuts"—or, for baby boomers, "The Carol Burnett Show." It is comprised of a collection of comedy skits, some of them with recurring segments and characters. Bynes is a truly talented comedienne, which is surprising for one so young.

But then, that should come as no surprise to kids who have grown up on the Nickelodeon channel. Just a few years ago, the adolescent icon was Melissa Joan Hart, who starred in the TV show "Clarissa." (Hart has since then moved to the movies and plays the lead in the teen show, "Sabrina.") At that time, Amanda Bynes was a cast member of the show "All That" which had a format comprised of a collection of skits and comedy routines.

Bynes did a great job in a segment called "Ask Ashley." She played the role of a perfect little girl who is an advice columnist. She'd start out sweetly reading a letter, then when it was time to give advice, would end up screaming like a banshee.

Amanda also sometimes guested on the children's game show "Figure it Out." She would be one of four celebrity panelists who had to guess a person's unique talent. This could range from a special ability to bite cheese into the shape of any American state, to being able to belch out a Christmas carol.

Now, a fashionable and bubbly Amanda has emerged with her own program, where she plays a wide range of characters, from nerdy stalker (of the celebrity Amanda) to celebrity Amanda herself.

Nerdy kid

We like her depiction of the nerdy kid, and are sometimes amused by the "Moody" segments. Moody is the name of the star of a soap opera (also played by Amanda) which makes much ado over nothing. Bland as it may sound, therein lies its humor.

We also like the young boy who sports a mop top cut, wields a guitar, and does a camp rendition of a young teen telling a story replete with "so you knows" and other cliche asides. No sound and fury; no restrained intensity. Largely, he signifies nothing, and therein lies *his* humor.

Now, what about "Lizzie Maguire?"

"Lizzie Maguire" is the title of a television program which stars another adolescent icon, Hilary Duff, a blondie with a winsome smile, who wrestles with the adolescent travails of school life.

In control

Lizzie's life is not complicated, so she wrestles with no tremendous angst. She has her problems, but she's more or less still in control. She enjoys a normal school life and has good, loyal friends. Every episode of the program deals with good values. And Lizzie gets to wear powder blue feathers and fun, retro clothes and accessories.

Hilary started out in the movies as Wendy the Witch. She also did a movie where she played a high school cadet. She is slated to star in the new film, "Agent Cody Banks." In "Lizzie Maguire," she shows no great acting flair, and is no comedienne like Amanda, but her smile and laughing eyes play out well in the adolescent imagination.

I have watched a few episodes of "Lizzie Maguire" and it is a good, formulaic pre-teen show. It has a fast pace and facets that are interesting to watch. A child will enjoy the fashion statements of the kids, and appreciate its simple stories about school life.

There is also much room for identification and fantasy (like the time when Lizzie becomes a promising ramp model, but decides to ruin her career because her friends treat her too much like a star.)

Retro music

In another episode, Lizzie's best friend Gordo is upset because retro music (which he loves) becomes the trend in school. As a result, he pursues a new "passion" that he hates. The episode examines the difference between individuality and simply being different for its own sake.

Lizzie is more personable than pretty—certainly she doesn't have the looks of a campus queen. That is what makes identification so much easier. She seems to be more approachable, and has a lot of fun with her life.

Who would young kids rather be—Amanda or Lizzie? My daughter chose Lizzie. Why? Because, while Amanda is more talented and prettier, she also seems to work a lot harder on her show. Also, she has to play dorky roles. "You kind of lose your dignity," she says.

Lizzie Maguire is a less difficult role to play. And her colorful clothes and accessories, plus her school life, are a lot more enjoyable. Young kids wanna be cool!

'The Healing Cuisine' on spinach and cucumber

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WHY did Popeye take his spinach? Harish Johari in his book "The Healing Cuisine," explains why:

Minerals and vitamins

"Delicious if cooked properly, spinach is rich in minerals and vitamins. It contains protein, carbohydrates and vitamins A.C, and riboflavin. It also contains the minerals calcium, iron, copper, and phosphorus. Spinach has more vitamin A than any other green vegetable.

"Spinach is well-known for its iron and copper content. It contains a substance that stimulates the iron already present in the blood, which activates the formation of hemoglobin. This makes it a good food for people suffering from anemia.

"Spinach stimulates digestion and absorption, producing very little flatulence. Its post-digestive action is alkaline. It is not advisable to eat spinach raw because it contains oxalic acid, which aggravates gout and liver ailments.

"When steamed, however, the oxalate content of spinach is separated from its cellulose, and when blended with spices such as garlic, fenugreek, turmeric, coriander, cumin, cardamom, cloves, black peppers, and especially nutmeg, its harmful effect is eliminated from the body."

Potato soup

There are different ways of using spinach to enhance our health: Include it in potato soup of any vegetable soup; add it to your noodle soup to increase the nutrient value; include spinach in fried rice; sauté tomatoes and toss in the spinach together with some spices and soy sauce.

"Another very beneficial vegetable is cucumber. It belongs to the squash family and, in very small quantities, contains all the food substances necessary for the preservation of health. Cucumbers contain protein, carbohydrates, fat, and vitamins, such as thiamine, riboflavin, ascorbic acid, nicotinic acid, and vitamin A; it also contain minerals, such as calcium, phosphorus, and iron.

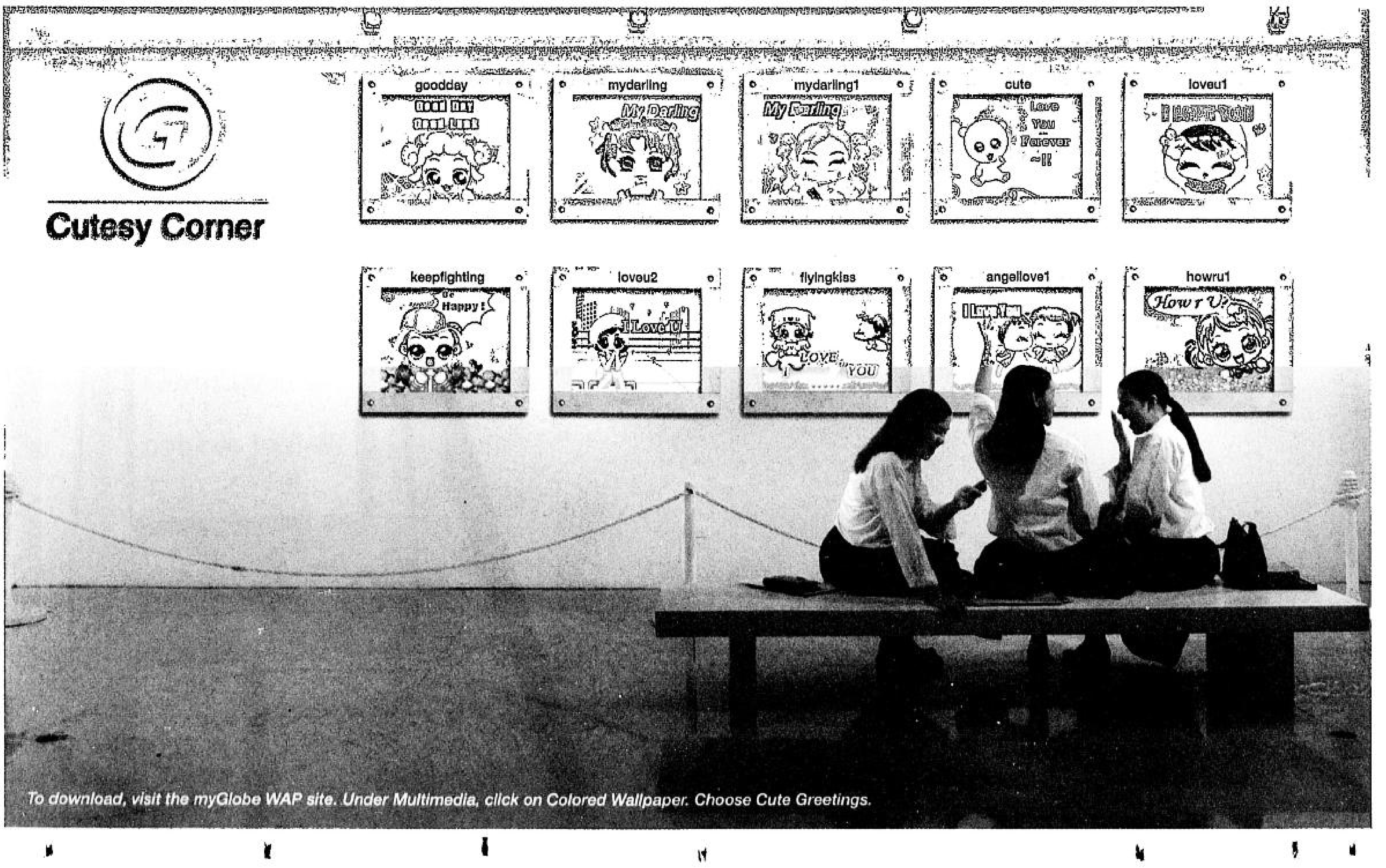
"The cucumber is cooling, calming and refreshing. It works magically on restlessness caused by heat; its juice gives instantaneous relief to any burning sensation in the stomach.

Combination

"Cucumber juice can be taken in combination with other juices, such as carrot or pineapple. They are not only refreshing but also healing and rejuvenating. You will need a juicer to extract the juice from the cucumber."

Johari adds that cucumber does not only cure constipation but also works as a diuretic and thus promotes the flow of urine when it is eaten raw. The seeds are also beneficial because they contain protein and fat; they are also used as a general tonic by some people in India.

Email lotuspond108@hotmail.com



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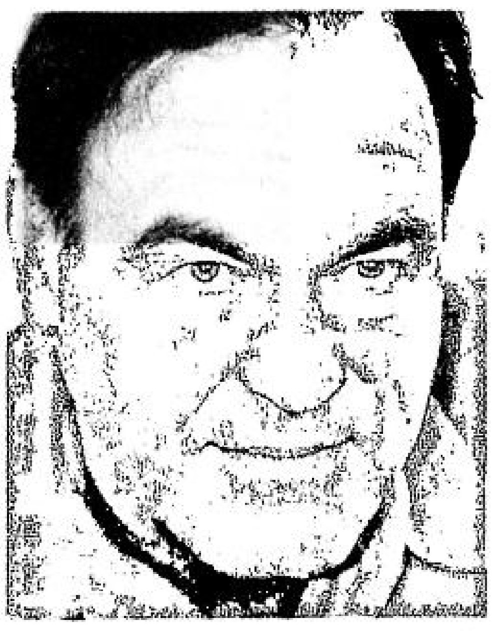


STONE. Taped 30 hours of conversation with Fidel Castro. REUTERS

Stone adds dissidents to Castro docu

By Anthony Boadle

HAVANA—Director Oliver Stone was back in Cuba this week to ask President Fidel Castro about a recent crackdown on dissidents and interview some of his opponents for a controversial documentary that HBO considered incomplete.

Ferry

"The interviews and information will be added to the documentary," Stone's publicist Tony Angellotti said from Los Angeles.

The US cable television network HBO last month pulled the documentary "Comandante" from its May schedule after Cuba's communist authorities jailed 75 dissidents and executed by firing squad three men who hijacked a ferry in hopes of reaching the United States.

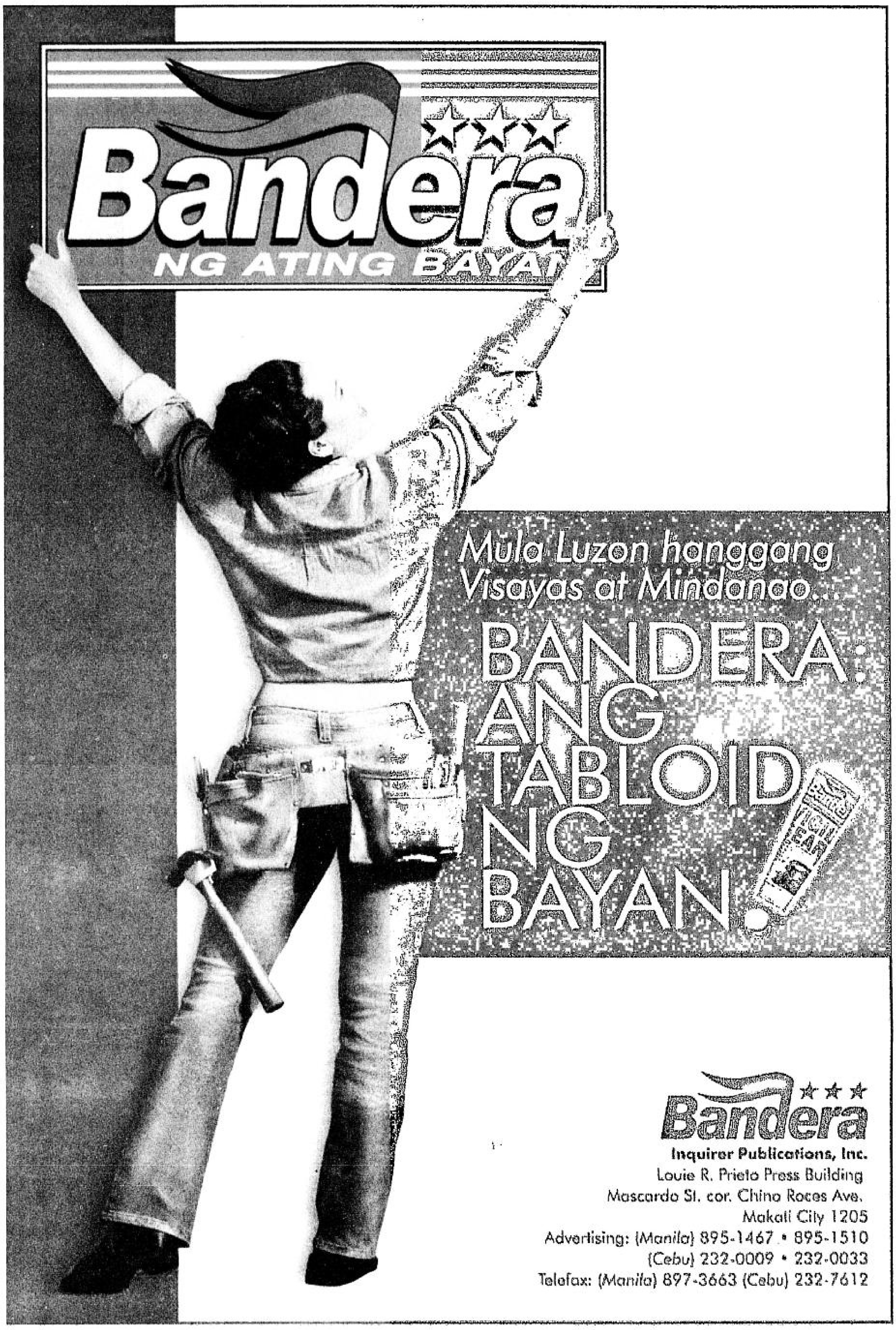
The 90-minute documentary, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January, is a profile of Castro, whom Stone views as "one of the Earth's wisest people." Critics said the film was a whitewash of human rights abuses in Cuba by the director of the films "JFK" and "Nixon." On Tuesday, Stone interviewed dissident Oswaldo Paya, who has headed a signature drive calling for democratic reforms to the island's one-party system.

Misinformed

"I thought he was very misinformed about what is going on in Cuba. He was more interested in the love life of Fidel Castro than what is happening to 11 million Cubans," Paya said.

Stone's production team also interviewed the wives of dissidents who were sentenced to up to 28 years in prison.

"The recent events in Cuba were of significant interest to Oliver," said Angellotti. "Oliver isn't one to simply lift things from the news, and he wanted to see it first hand." HBO had canceled "Comandante" saying that unless Stone returned to Cuba and interviewed Castro, the documentary would appear "dated and incomplete." The network still plans to run the film, said HBO spokeswoman Leslie Martinelli on Friday. "We need to sit down with Oliver now and see how to put it all together," she said. *Reuters*



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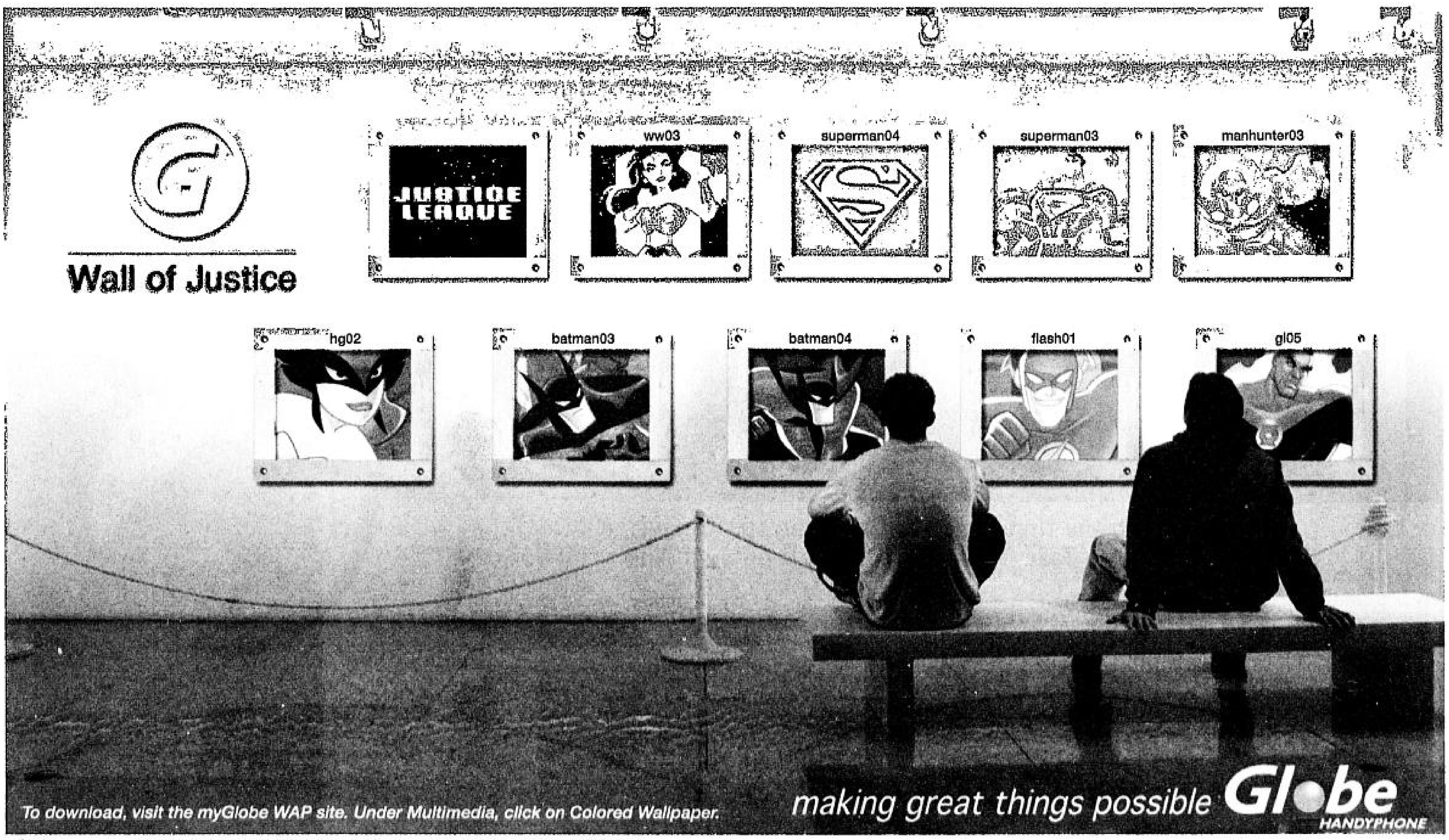

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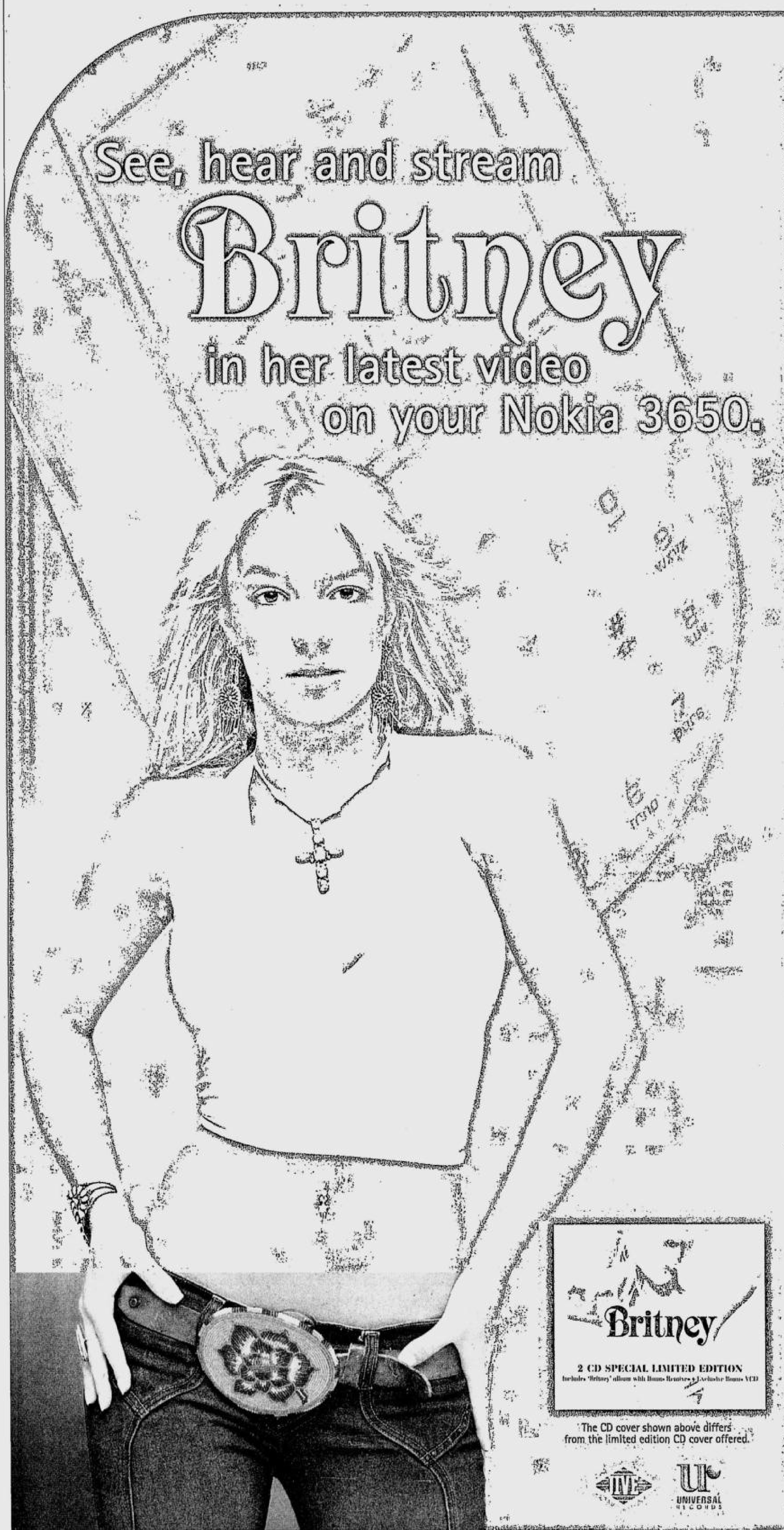
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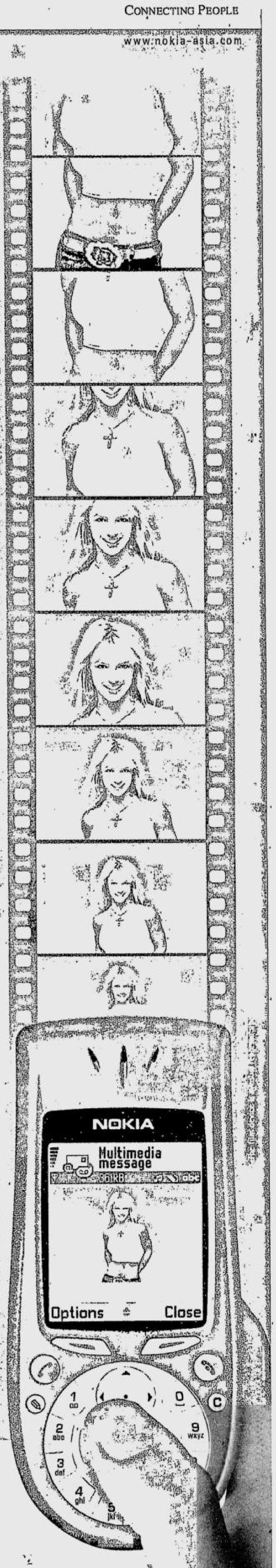
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Arnie, back as Terminator, blows away 2003 Cannes film festival

By Marc Burleigh

CANNES—Arnold Schwarzenegger upstaged the Cannes film festival over the weekend with a lavish party and appearances designed to promote his return as the killer cyborg in the upcoming movie "Terminator 3: The Rise of the Machines."

Exclusive bash

The exclusive bash, hosted by MTV and held in Pierre Cardin's private Riviera villa last Saturday night, outshone all other functions on Cannes' glitzy party circuit—even the pyrotechnic launch put on earlier in the festival for the Terminator's biggest rival this year, "The Matrix Reloaded."

The former Austrian bodybuilder circulated among guests in Cardin's sprawling hilltop property, taking a moment to chat with many. The VIP crowd included Oscar-winning actor Adrien Brody, former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, and Mick Jagger's ex, Jerry Hall.

At one point, Schwarzenegger grabbed Cardin to bring him over for a photo pose, prompting the French fashion designer to say: "Suddenly I felt very light—he lifted me up like a matchstick."

"T3", as the new instalment in the sci-fi series is being called, wasn't being shown at Cannes, but Schwarzenegger and the producers were keen to use the media spotlight on the event to build hype for its release in July and August.

"This is the best place to promote the movie. This is the capital of the world for film promotion. All the movie journalists in the world are here," Schwarzenegger said during a publicity stunt on Cannes' seafront earlier Saturday.

Robots

Standing between two swiveling robots, the 55-year-old star grinned widely at 1,000 people who had crowded in front of a slick-looking set to see him.

Speaking over fans yelling "Arnie! Arnie!" and the thunderous theme music of the "Terminator" series, Schwarzenegger promised "special effects and stunts you've never seen before" and urged people to go see the film.

"Remember, as I say: I'll be back," the actor said to wrap up his appearance.

The latest "Terminator" movie is seen as something of a last chance for Arnie to hold on to his A-list status.

Although still looking in terrific shape, despite a series of operations, including for his heart and shoulder, his box office appeal has been shrinking down the same tube that has already swallowed Sylvester Stallone.

Returning as the time-travelling man-machine could restore his place in the Hollywood firmament, and perhaps not coincidentally give him a public image boost before entering the race to become California's next governor—a rumored ambition he has neither confirmed nor denied.

Faith

Certainly the producers of "T3", Mario Kassar and Andy Vajna of C2 Pictures, have faith.

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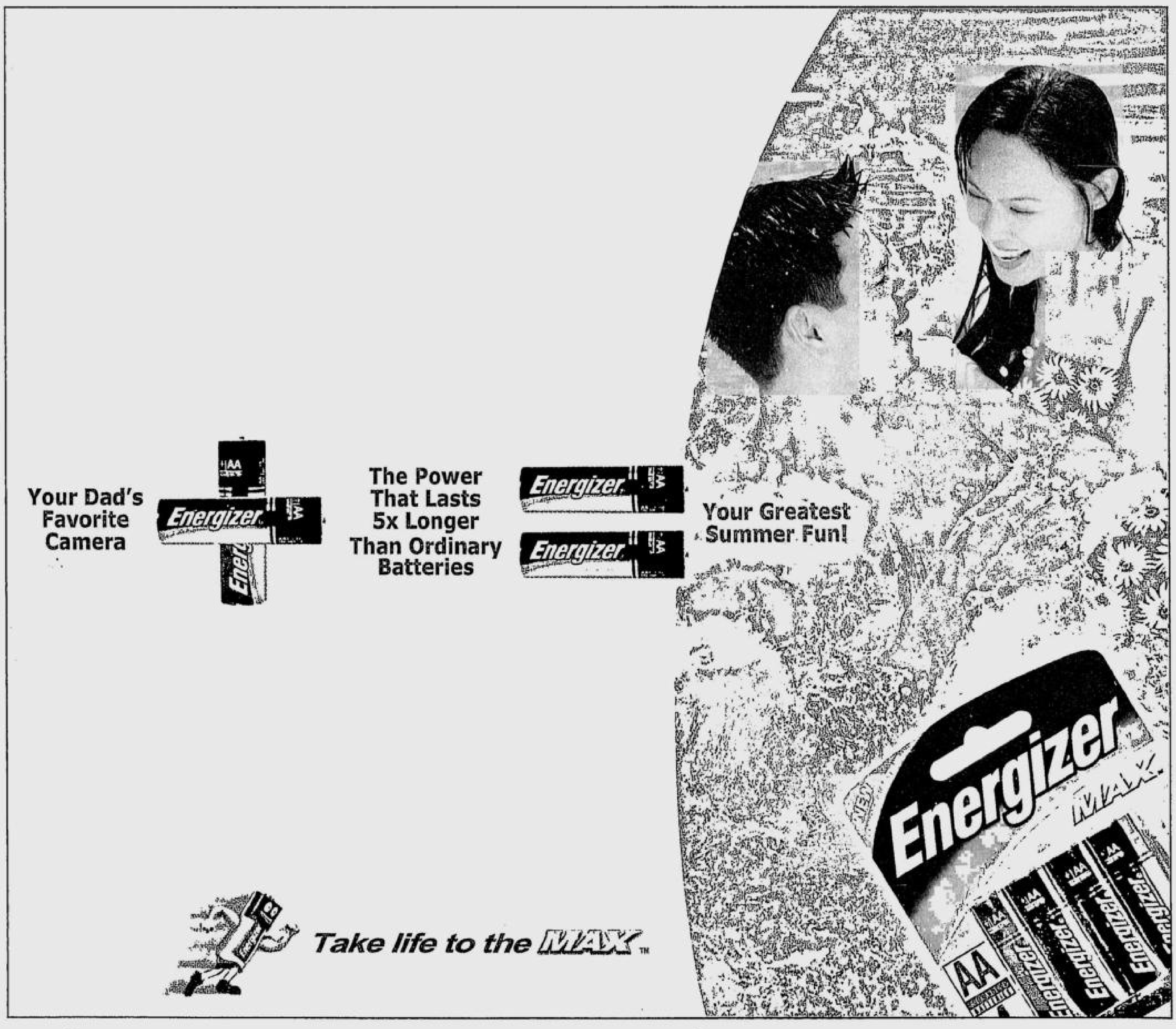

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Young stars get more exposure on TV soaps

RAVALES. Plays a good guy this season.

DEL ROSARIO. No major problems.

By Edmund L. Sicam

TODAY'S young comers are getting plenty of exposure on the daily soaps that dominate the top two networks' primetime hours. At GMA, Chubi del Rosario and Polo Ravales are mainstays on "Ikaw Pa Rin," along with newcomer Angel Locsin and Anne Curtis.

Chubby kid

Chubi, whose full name is Robertino Emmanuel del Rosario, is turning 19 on May 29. He tells us that he got his name, Chubi, because he was a very chubby kid. "*Hanggang ngayon may konti pa . . . pero pawala na!*" the teener jokes. He says that people around him have been telling him that he has gained some weight, which becomes amplified once he is onscreen. So just last week, he started a new health regimen.

Just like most kids his age, he loves to watch TV and fiddle around with his computer. "When I'm really bored, I chat, play games (on the computer)," says Chubi. He says that his favorite websites are sports sites like espn.com, where he follows the NBA games and tennis tournaments. Chubi shares that although he loves playing basketball, he is not a very skilled player.

Chubi was a student at De La Salle-Zobel High School when he stopped going to school because of his show biz commitments. He decided to go on home-study, so now he is eligible to go to college. His dilemma now is finding a school that will allow him to still continue his career. "I need one that will allow a lot of absences. *Kasi* if you're going to be taping two to three times a week and you have shows on the side and you have guestings, it's hard," laments Chubi.

Child star

Chubi started in show biz when he was nine years old. He had a role in the movie, "Baby Love." As he grew older, he moved into cutesy love-team mode, and was paired with Anne (Curtis) on shows like "Campus Romance" and "GMA Love Stories."

When the role in "Ikaw Pa Rin" was offered to him, he immediately grabbed the chance. "It's nice *din* to prove to people that I can be a serious actor."

However, Chubi confesses that drama is not really his forte. There are times when he is afraid that he will not be able to cry. This he attributes to the fact that he has not had any major problems in his life so far.

Good guy

Polo Ravales plays a good guy in this season of "Ikaw Pa Rin." In the past, his character was the antagonist, but he has had a change of heart.

On the set of his soap opera, he shares that he sometimes gets carried away. Polo discloses that he often recalls sad episodes from his own life to motivate himself for his dramatic scenes. "*Pag talagang hindi ka ma*-affect, *kailangan mong gamitin ang* personal."

Polo also talks to us about his relationship with the outspoken Alessandra De Rossi. He shares that he and Alex started out as friends. It was three months before they realized that they were falling for each other. Unfortunately, after they became a couple, the friends that they used to hang out with started to disappear, until only the two of them were left.

He says he doesn't feel that there are any special advantages or disadvantages to having a girlfriend who's also in show business. "Advantage *lang, mas naiintindihan ng ka*-partner *mo, kasi nasa* show biz *siya*."

Professional jealousy

Polo admits that, occasionally, there is some professional jealousy between him and Alex. "*Pero hindi naman* big deal *talaga*." Alex is known for her off-the-cuff statements that gets blown up in media. Polo admits that he feels uncomfortable about her outbursts. Lately, he has been advising her to tone down her comments, and she's been heeding his advice.

Rediscovering Tetchie Agbayani

By: Agnes P. de Guzman and Ronald G. Mangubat

> 'As long as my daughter remembers me as a great mom, that would already be sheer joy for me. I'm no longer scrambling for a place under the show biz sun. I'm more relaxed, I leave everything up to God'

ACTRESS Tetchie Agabayni's last film was Raymond Red's "Sakay," after which we didn't hear from her again. Not until last year, when she started appearing in a TV soap, did we realize that she is back in show business.

Breathtaking

Physically, except for a few unwanted pounds she's trying hard to shed, Tetchie's beauty is still breathtaking. Her naughty and expressive cat-like eyes still mesmerize, her oriental skin glows and her chiseled nose and well-shaped lips command stares from the public.

But the more significant changes that have happened to this former Playboy model are the confidence and wisdom that she now exudes. Years after a brief stint in Hollywood, Tetchie became a full-time mom to her daughter Christianna (now 11 years old), whom she fondly calls China.

In 1996, she decided to finish college and after four years, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. A year later, she took the entrance exam for graduate school at Ateneo and is a few units away from earning her Master's degree in psychology.

Because of the intellectual stimulus and the psychic joy that she gets from her graduate studies, Tetchie is planning to pursue her Ph.D afterwards. "Ten years from now, people will address me as Dr. Tetchie," she laughingly tells us.

Talking with Tetchie Agbayani is a delightful, engaging experience. She is silver-tongued, sensible, intelligent and has a wonderful sense of humor. In this interview, she talks about her brief international stint as an actress, life as a graduate student, her comeback, plans for the future—etc.!

Why did you leave for the States in 1983?

Tetchie: Contrary to what others think, I didn't leave because I wanted to pursue a Hollywood dream. I left because I got tired of the whole Playboy issue.

Looking back, would you still have posed for Playboy?

With the choices that I have now? No. But at that time, it was the best choice I could make. I have no regrets about doing Playboy *kasi* it's like freezing a moment in your life for posterity. Playboy really made me a household name. It was good in the sense that I became popular. The downside of it was, they typecast me in sexy roles.

TETCHIE plays Sisa in "Noli Me Tangere."

AGBAYANI. Now exudes confidence and wisdom.

IN 10 years' time, you can call her "Dr. Tetchie."

How did you get to act in international films?

After two months in the States, I was running out of money. I literally had $5 in my pocket. *Sabi nung* friend *ko na Pinay,* why don't you try it here in LA, *artista ka naman? Sabi ko, Diyos ko, sino namang magkakagusto sa akin e maraming magaganda rito?*

Agents

But I tried. I talked to agents, *nag*-audition *ako*. The competition was fierce, but one day, my agent called me and said that I got a part in "Emerald Forest" and that I would fly for Brazil in several days.

Is it true that you almost played opposite Sylvester Stallone in "Rambo 2?"

Yes, I got the part, but I turned it down. *Nung una, interesado ako kasi ang* shooting *daw sa* jungles *ng Pilipinas. Naho*-home sick *na 'ko noon* so I thought, chance *ko nang makauwi sa atin.*

Talent fee

But they changed their plans and said *sa* Mexico *na lang daw. Tapos, mababa pa yung* talent fee, something like $7,000. *Mas mataas yung* talent fee *ko sa* "Emerald Forest." *Pero nag*-audition *na ako* with Sylvester Stallone. He's not very tall *pala*. But he's very muscular!

What have you learned from your brief stint in Hollywood?

Before I left, I'd been hearing people say that as an actor, you have to be a role model. But that didn't really sink in or resonate with me. But what I realized in the four years that I was gone is that, whether we like it or not, we are really role models. For better or for worse *yon*. So I told myself, next time, when I work, I have to take into consideration the effects of my performance.

What made you decide to go back to school?

When my daughter was already going to school, I had nothing to do. And then I said, *ano ba 'yan? Walang* meaning *ang* existence *ng* beauty *ko*! So *nag*-entrance exam *ako sa* school *ng anak ko,* and they found out *na* below average *raw ang* IQ *ko*! (Laugh) So *na*-challenge *ako* and, four years later, I graduated, BS in psychology!

And then you went to graduate school?

After college, I looked at my horizon and saw a three-pronged road. First, I could go back full-time to show biz. Second, I could work in the corporate world. Third, I could pursue higher studies. I chose the third one.

So, how's life in graduate school?

I really enjoy it at Ateneo. Dream *ko 'yan, e.* When I passed the entrance exam, *humagulgol talaga ang* beauty *ko*! *Sabi nung* driver *ko, ba't ho kayo umiiyak, Ma'am? Sabi ko, wala, nakapasa ako sa* Ateneo! *Tapos,* cry *ulit ako.* (Laugh)

Classmates

Lahat ng mga classmates *ko pursigido. Lahat matatalino. Nagtutulungan kami.* I don't get any special treatment there.

Did your show biz comeback get in the way of your studies?

Hindi. I get to study in the evenings. *Tapos, mga* three subjects *lang ako* before I take my comprehensive exams.

What changes have you seen in the show biz system?

Well, there are more stars now. At ABS-CBN, they have a lot of seminars. They would even teach young stars how to deal with the press. *Pero ang* shelf life *ng mga* stars, *maigsi lang*. Aside from that, it's pretty much the same.

Why do you think the careers of local sexy stars are so ephemeral now?

A star's longevity is dictated by a lot of factors. You have to be handled by a good manager. You have to have something in between your ears, otherwise, *madali kang maloloko.*

Factors

There's also such a thing as being over-exposed. So, *maraming* factors *yan*.

Why did you accept a *kontrabida* role in "Basta't Kasama Kita?"

I like the role because it's not uni-dimensional. She's not a *kontrabida* who is bad from day one. The story will tell how she got to be like that and the viewers will understand why, despite her evil, scheming ways, she's also *nakakaawa*.

Do you still have dream roles? What are they?

Wala na siguro. I've pretty much portrayed good roles. I've played "Sisa" and a giant goddess in "Kamakalawa." I've had good roles in plays like "The Owl and the Pussycat." I've worked with good directors like Tito Eddie Romero. *Masaya na ako.*

How do you see yourself 10 years from now?

I will be addressed as Dr. Tetchie! (Laughs) *Naka*-French twist *ang* hair *ko. Naka*-pearl earrings. I will be a very dignified matron. I will have a syndicated counseling show on radio and TV.

Masses

I'm a practicing psychologist, but I want to merge psychology and mass media. I want to bring this discipline down to the level of the masses.

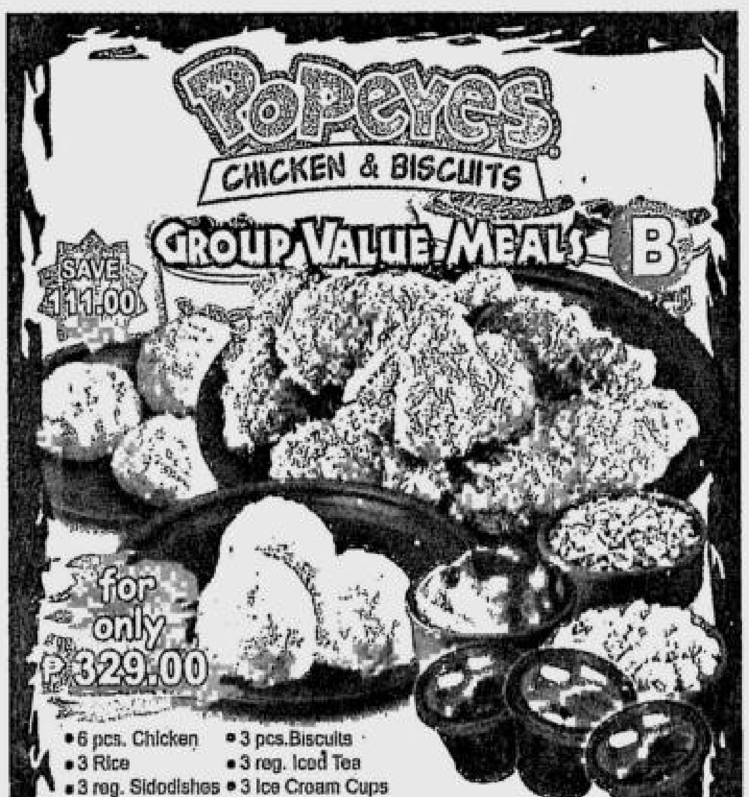
Just like Dr. Phil in "Oprah?"

Korek! (Laughs)

When people say Tetchie Agbayani, what would you like them to think?

Kakaiba siya! (Laughs) Seriously, I don't have illusions about that. As long as my daughter remembers me as a great mom, that would already be sheer joy for me. I'm no longer scrambling for a place under the show biz sun.

I'm more relaxed, I leave everything up to God. I'm so glad that everytime I make a comeback to show biz, I'm always warmly welcomed. *At ang importante, hindi nag-de*-depreciate *ang presyo ko!* Everytime *na bumabalik ako,* appreciated *ang aking* price. *Para akong* Bordeaux! Vintage. *O, di ba?* (Laughter)



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Arnie, back as Terminator, blows away . . .

From page L1

They refuse to say how much the film cost, but industry magazines put it at around $170 million (150 million euros)—slightly more than the latest "Matrix" film. Schwarzenegger himself is to pocket the sum of $30 million for the role.

According to reports and movie websites, the new movie sees Arnie's cyborg trying to save an adult John Connor from a sexy but deadly female Terminator, played by Norwegian actress Kristanna Loken.

Nothing more than the trailer and a few two-minute excerpts were shown in Cannes, but those who have seen them say the production looks like a winner.

C2 Pictures and the action star are already in talks for a possible "Terminator 4," though the producers say they first want to see how "T3" is received.

"I think action movies will always be there, but what is important is to have a story that is heartwarming, that gets the audience in," Vajna said at a conference hosted by the industry insider magazine Variety. *AFP*

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Depardieu savors his 'exceptional vintages'

By Perrine Faye

DEPARDIEU. Started making wine 30 years ago. AP

LONDON—Savoring a glass of one of his own vintage reds, French film star Gerard Depardieu dwells on the origins of his love affair with wine:

First bottles

"My passion for wine? It dates back to before I was born," he told AFP during a visit to London to promote the first bottles of the 2002 vintage from his own vineyards.

"I even believe my mother's amniotic fluid was wine," joked the thespian and vintner who has played the likes of Cyrano de Bergerac and Obelix over a critically acclaimed career.

Depardieu, 54, whose latest film "City of Ghosts" came out in April, started making wine 30 years ago, near the start of his screen career, when he bought one hectare in Burgundy.

In 1989, having firmly established his name as one of France's top actors, he moved up to a 110-hectare domain, Chateau de Tigne, in Anjou which now produced 500,000 to 600,000 bottles a year.

Meeting

Following a meeting in 2001 with Burgundy-based global wine merchant Bernard Magrez, Depardieu acquired Chateau Gadet in Medoc, and 2.2 hectares at Aniane, in the Languedoc region.

Depardieu calls Magrez "my spiritual father . . . we share the same unbearable energy, the same love of life (and) the same demands for perfection." With the actor's partner and frequent co-star Carole Bouquet, the two men have teamed up to create a particularly high-quality range of wines, produced in traditional style, in small quantities.

These "special cuvees" are particularly close to Depardieu's heart, as he is eager to defend the time-honored ways of winemaking in an era of mass production.

"These 'special cuvees' are like making a film in a foreign country," he said. "You are three months in that country, you learn to know its history, its culture." "To make such wine is to know a 'terroir' (plot of rich soil) that pleases you. It's about having two, three hectares, then simply producing the best that the soil can give you."

His Aniane vineyard is in the same area where local opposition led big-volume California winemaker Robert Mondavi to drop plans to move in and make high-class Languedoc with prices to match.

Robust character

Personally, Depardieu favors "Ma Verite" (My Truth), one of his own exceptional vintages, for its robust character, and Bouquet's "La Croix de Peyrolie" (The Cross of Peyrolie) for its subtlety.

He also likes "Monica," an Algerian wine that he can't find words to describe. *AFP*

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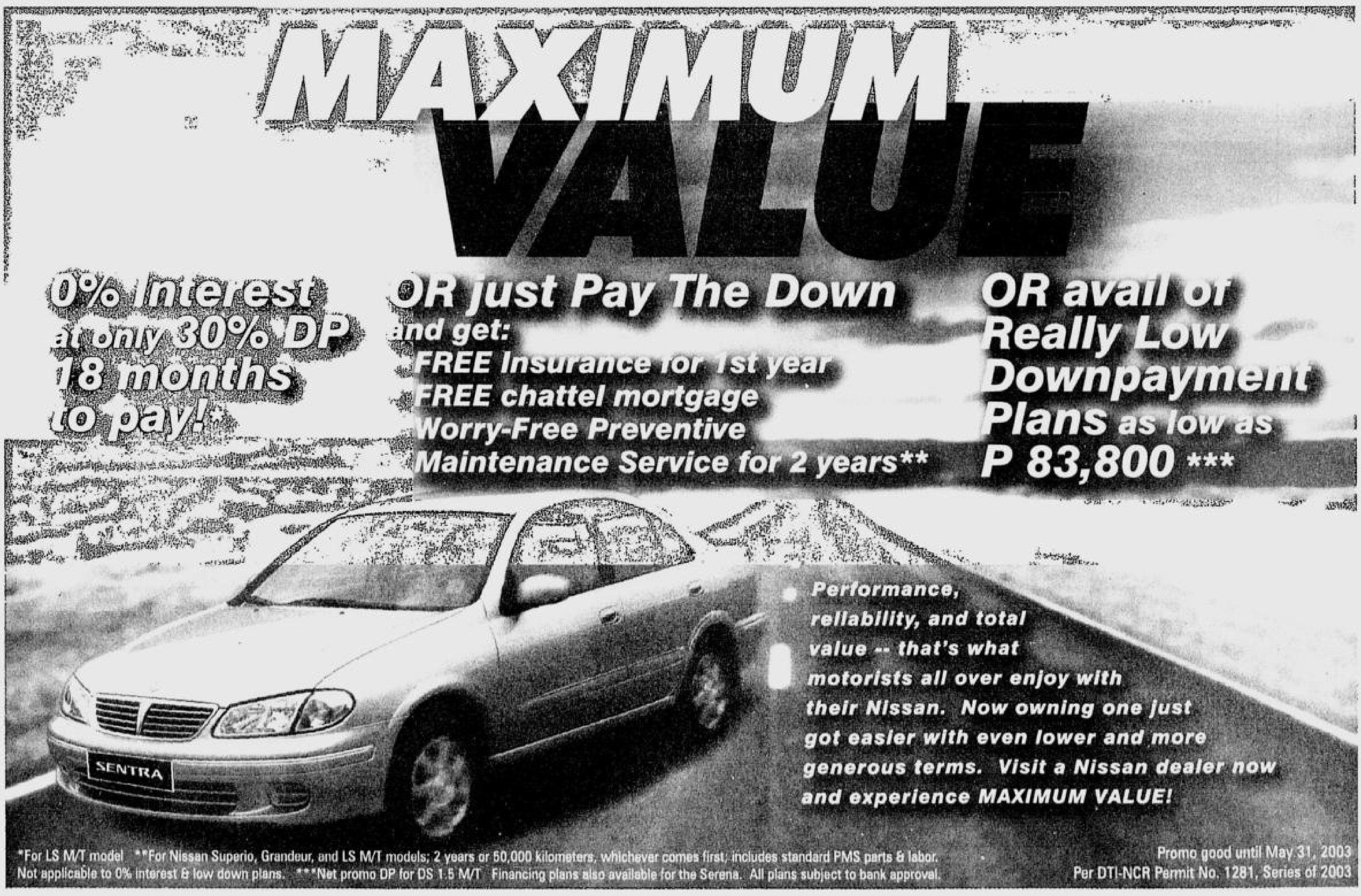

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Youthful exuberance marks Torre siblings' art show today

By Andy Bais

THE PHILIPPINE arts scene is continually re-energized and enlivened by the involvement of new generations of young artists. Their spontaneous love for artistic expression is made even more remarkable when they are members of the same family.

Shared interest

This indicates that the arts are a shared interest, an integral part of their growth as siblings, in a home where self-expression through the arts isn't a chore but a joy, an act as natural as breathing.

This is the case with the Torre family of Iloilo, Pandan, Cagayan de Oro and Manila. All five gifted and goodlooking children of Mrs. Jurosi Mecenas Torre and the late Angel Eugenio Torre have grown up in an artistic environment, and have enthusiastically become young artists in their own right.

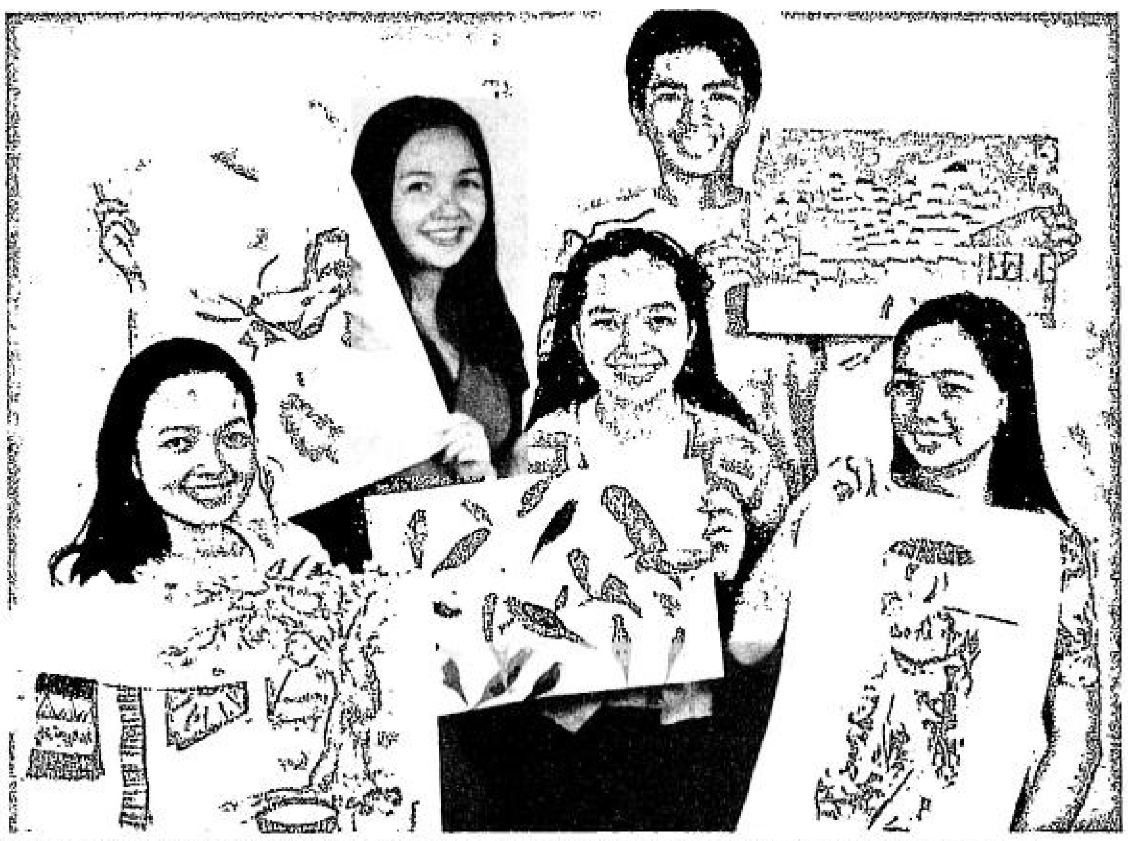
Today, at 4 p.m. at the Sta. Ana Arts Center, Leia, Noelani, Angeli, Janboy and Roseanne Torre are holding a group exhibit of their artworks, in celebration of the range and exuberance of the visual arts, as seen through their youthful eyes.

Inspiring

It's inspiring to see these five siblings, with ages ranging from 22 to 13, sketching and painting together. Interestingly, although they sketch together, they have their own individual styles as visual artists.

This is because, from a very early age, they were encouraged by their uncle, Nestor U. Torre, the writer and director who's also a visual artist in his own right, not to imitate anybody, but to paint freely and spontaneously, as an individual act of self-expression.

Thus, their sketches and paintings are wonderfully diverse—and confident, although most of them haven't taken up formal courses in the visual arts.


YOUNG ARTISTS WITH THEIR COLORFUL PAINTINGS. Clockwise from top, Janboy, Roseanne, Angeli, Noelani and Leia.

The exceptions are Noelani and Angeli, both graduates of the National High School for the Arts on Mt. Makiling in Laguna. Angeli was a visual arts scholar; while her concentration was in creative writing, Noelani took up some painting subjects, as well

At present, Angeli is an incoming sophomore at the College of Fine Arts at UP Diliman, and Noelani is majoring in Art Studies.

Community venue

The Torre siblings are particularly happy that their exhibit is being held at a community venue like the Sta. Ana Arts Center, courtesy of Manila Councilor Lou Veloso, who's a theater artist himself. This means that the exhibit will be accessible to residents of the community where they live on weekends or on summer vacations, especially to young people like them, so their exhibit will be a fun activity for everyone.

They are also happy that their group exhibit is being supported by their many "surrogate" *ninongs* and *ninangs* from the worlds of theater, music and film, who have promised to be present when their exhibit opens this afternoon, to give the five young artists' love for the arts a big boost.

McCartney plays to huge crowd in Rome

ROME—Around half million people from across Italy were treated to a magical night outside Rome's Colosseum Sunday when Paul McCartney gave a free concert by the 2,000-year-old venue.

Favorites

For almost three hours, McCartney took the crowd through favorites from his Beatles days: "Lady Madonna," "Back in the USSR," "Michelle," "Hey Jude," to finish with "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and a solo performance of "Yesterday."

But the 60-year-old, who performed inside the ancient forum the previous night in front of 400 paying fans at a benefit concert, also played songs from his band Wings and his solo career, in front a backdrop colored green, pink, yellow and white.

Younger fans

If the fiftysomethings in the audience knew the words to his songs, the younger fans simply let themselves be carried away by the music on a hot and humid Roman night.

"You have to go home," McCartney yelled as the crowd remained after midnight in the Fori Imperiali linking the central Piazza Venezia with the Colosseum.

Surrounded by a troupe of multicolored dancers who had opened the show as well as his own musicians, McCartney concluded in Italian: "Grazie Roma, arrivederci Roma" (thank you Rome, goodbye Rome). *AFP*

MCCARTNEY performs in front of Rome's ancient Colosseum.

AFP

French directors look to break long, dry spell

By Angela Doland

CANNES, France—It's beginning to seem like a local curse: In more than three decades, only one French film has won the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Local filmmakers

As the glitzy French Riviera festival opened, local filmmakers were looking to break the long, dry spell. Five out of the 20 films in the main competition are French, and French directors are the toast of Cannes—for a change.

The festival starts off with "Fanfan la Tulipe," about a skirt-chasing soldier of fortune, played by Vincent Perez.

Epic

Spanish star Penelope Cruz—who had to learn her French lines phonetically—is the leading lady in the epic set in 18th century France.

The movie isn't competing for prizes. Still, it puts French cinema and France's beautiful countryside in the spotlight.

Locations included the Fontainebleau forest outside Paris and the gently rolling hills of the Aveyron in the southwest.AP

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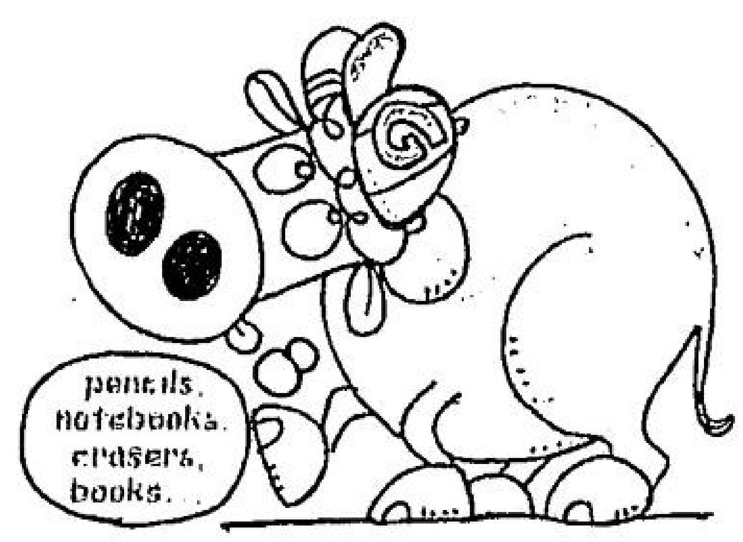

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Junior INQUIRER

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2003 ✦ 8 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 7, NUMBER 33

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Goodbye Summer!

Summer is sweet, especially when you spend part of it in a camp. In Camp Coleman, 18 campers have the time of their life and bid goodbye to summer 2003.

By Eline Santos

"THE Cross is falling!"

That's not Chicken Little scurrying around in fear but the happy campers of the first Camp Coleman.

On a visit to Mt. Samat Shrine, the cross appeared to be falling as the clouds swooped behind it.

Inside the cross is an elevator to the top, where you can view the surrounding island from inside the cross's arms.

"The wind is so cool!" exclaims 8-year-old camper, Gino Sison.

Gino is one of the 18 kids who learned how to pitch a tent, cook hotcakes, rappel and best of all meet new friends at the Montemar Beach Resort in Bagac, Bataan last April 10 to 12.

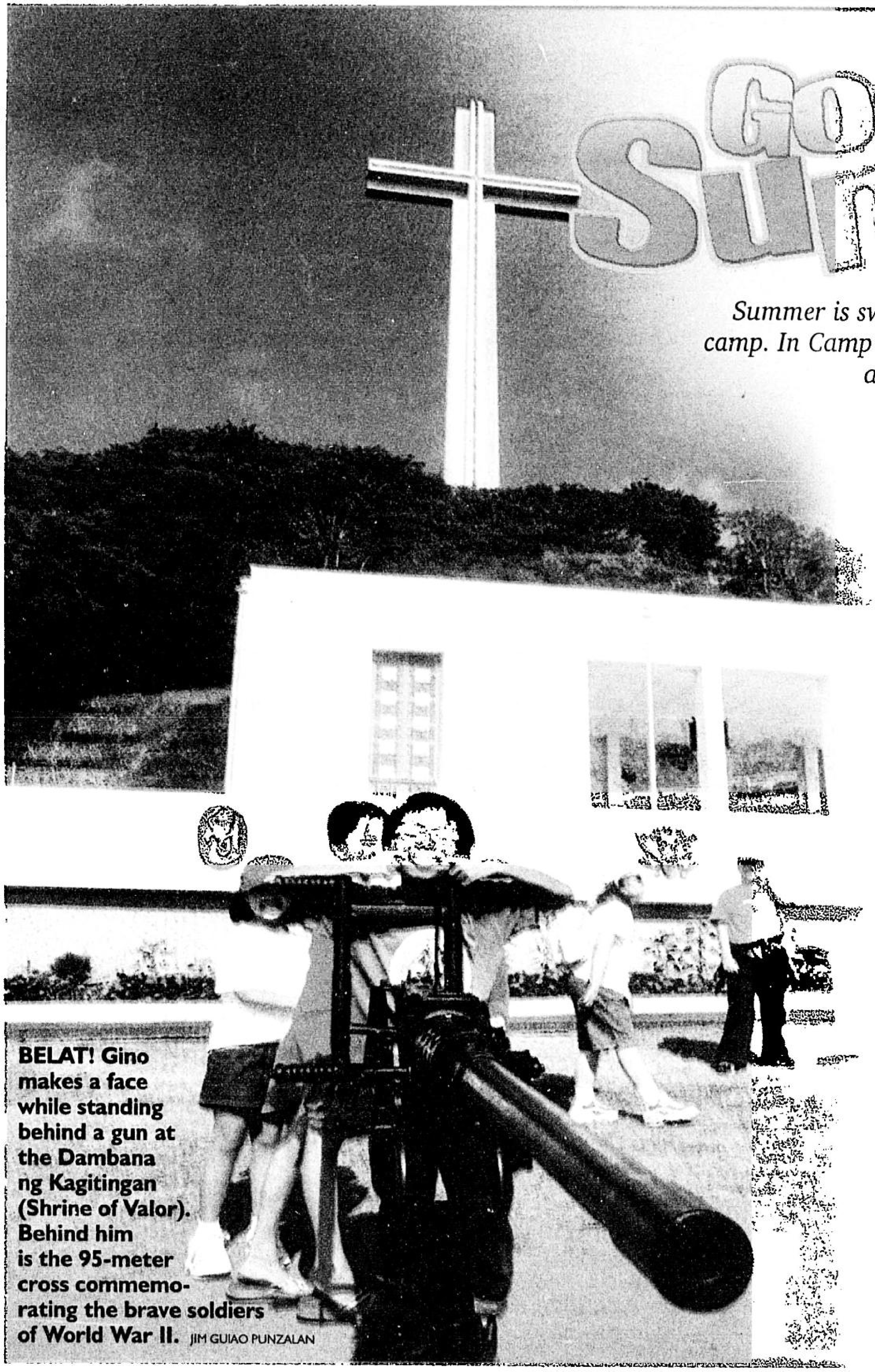
The 18 campers were divided into four teams: Green Hornets, Snipers, Cool Dragons and Broccoli Chicken Tempura.

Victory for Green Hornets

They all competed in various games such as the plank walk. Team Tempura beat the rest to win that event. But it was the Green Hornets who won three out of four games during the first day. They went on to win the exciting treasure hunt, and won as the best team at the end of camp!

"Our secret is teamwork and practice," says their leader Enzo Ledesma, 9. "When we didn't practice, we lost but when we practiced, we won. We also support each other."

Nine-year-old Dana Arellano and her cousin Adrian sometimes pitch a tent in their backyard. But Dana says the difference is, "When at camp, there's a lot of activities. I make new friends."



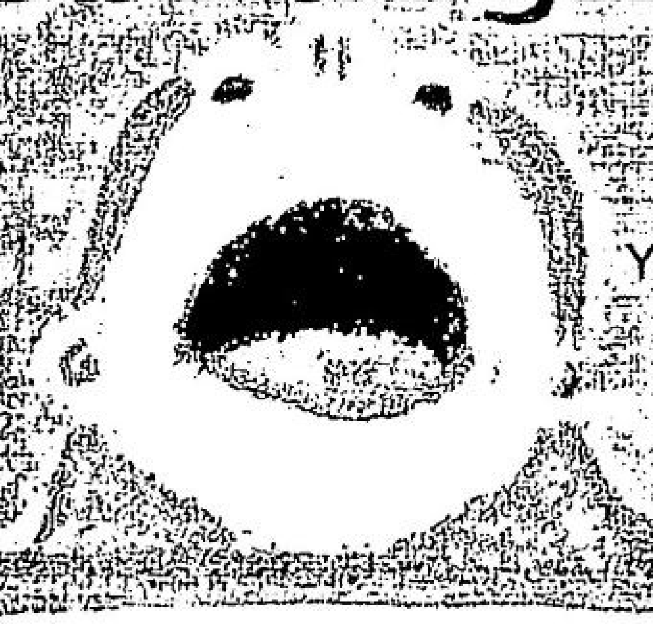
BELAT! Gino makes a face while standing behind a gun at the Dambana ng Kagitingan (Shrine of Valor). Behind him is the 95-meter cross commemorating the brave soldiers of World War II. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Dear Kids,

Junior Inquirer has a BIG surprise for you! Check out our issue next Saturday.

Love,
The Junior Inquirer Staff

Straight from JI Readers



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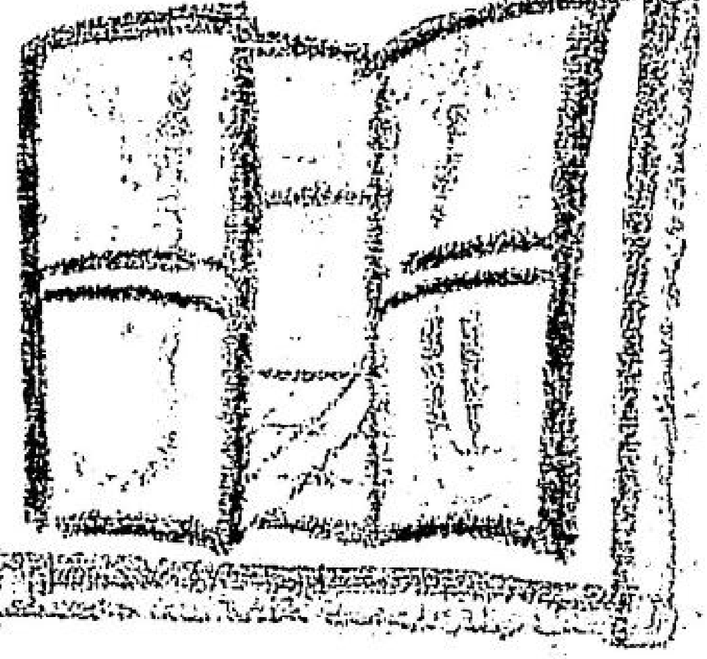


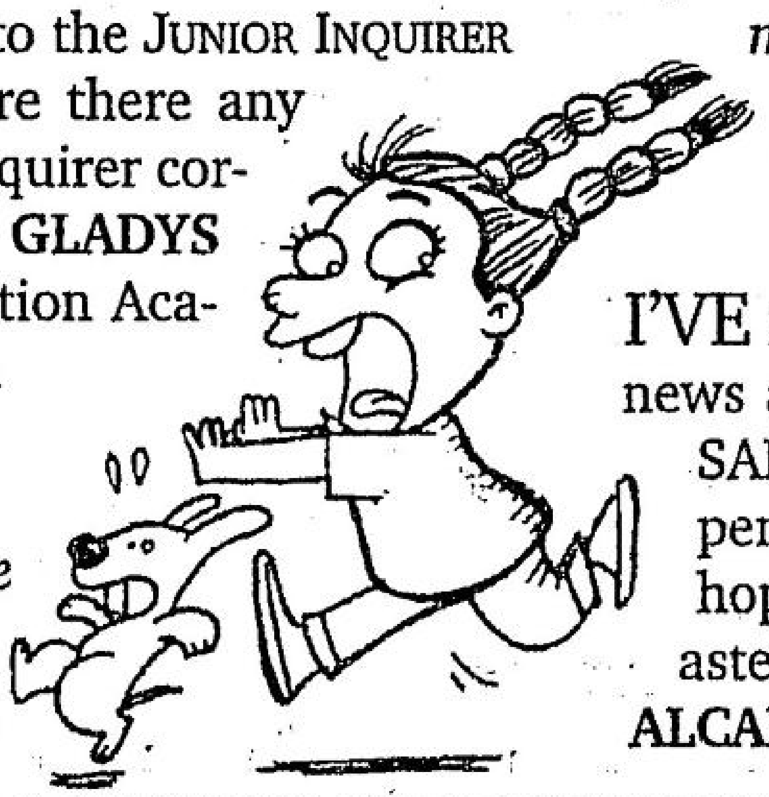
New JI Correspondents

DEAR Editor,

Hello! Warm greetings to the JUNIOR INQUIRER staff!!! I'd like to know, are there any openings for new Junior Inquirer correspondents?—**MICHELLE GLADYS S. SY**, Immaculate Conception Academy, Greenhills, San Juan

Dear Michelle,

We will be announcing the examinations for new correspondents very soon. Watch out for it on JI next month! We also have a ***surprise for everyone on our next issue.*** *Don't miss it!—The Editor*



Bad News

I'VE read from newspapers and seen on TV news about the war in Iraq and the spread of SARS. So many things have already happened and these affect children so much. I hope we can all help and unite to avoid disasters like these in the future.—**JENNIFER ALCANTARA**, 14, Cainta, Rizal

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World Scope

Expensive e-Pet

PRESENTING NEC Japan's Partner-Type Personal Robot. Call it PaPeRo for short. It sings, dances and chats with its friends. When not doing anything, it wanders around a room, burbling, or perhaps takes a nap. This very expensive electronic pet will be available in Japan in July. It costs a hefty $86,200, about P4.5 million. *AFP*

Rome,
Italy
Tokyo,
Japan

Happy Birthday JP2!

POPE John Paul II waves at the faithful as he arrives to celebrate a solemn Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican which elevated two fellow Poles and two Italians, all founders of religious orders, to sainthood. Pope John Paul celebrated his 83rd birthday on May 18, carrying out one of his favorite tasks—creating new saints as role models for members of the Roman Catholic Church. During his quarter of a century at the helm of the Church, Pope John Paul has created almost 470 new saints and beatified some 1,316 people. *Reuters*

Canon CAMERA • JUNIORINQUIRER Summer Photography Workshop

Another afternoon of fun and learning at the Canon-JI Photography Workshop

A photography workshop like no other. This is how some participants of the Canon-Junior Inquirer Summer Photography Workshop for Kids described their experience in the 2nd session of the workshop held last Saturday, May 17, at Kids At Work SM Megamall. If in the first session they learned the parts of a camera, the proper handling of the camera and correct body position and body posture when taking shots, this time they learned about shooting techniques.

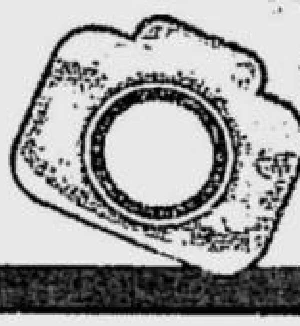
No less than George Tapan, a member of Canon's Magnificent 8 and a well-known travel photographer, facilitated the workshop. He taught them how important it is to be patient to catch scenes that are worth framing like the ones he showed in his coffee table book entited, Philippines Island of Enchantment. He discussed the following topics: choosing and framing the subject of the picture, techniques in avoiding blurred pictures, the different kinds of film and when to use a specific kind, and the ethics in photography.

Participants, kids aged 9-12, were allowed to go out of the lecture room and roam around Kids At Work's play area to take pictures and apply everything that was discussed to them in the lectures. The moment they stepped outside the lecture room they excitedly and eagerly took pictures. They were like a troop of small soldiers armed with their cameras ready to take pictures of anything that interests them.

Mascots from Henlin and Kids At Work added fun and excitement to the hands-on shooting session. The mascots served as the kids' subject for their pictures. Not only did the participants took pictures of the mascots, they also enjoyed playing with them.

Sponsors once again treated the participants with their products. Henlin and Anchor Milk provided the snacks for the afternoon. Free films from Canon were distributed to the kids which they used in the hands on shooting session. After they exhausted their films, they returned them for developing. Kameraworld provided the free developing of the pictures.

Participants took a pose for their class picture before they went home. Super East Asia Enterprises Inc., the exclusive distributor of Canon Camera in the Philippines assures that the next session of the Photography Workshop, to be held next Saturday, May 24, would be even more fun and exciting. Sponsors of the workshop that includes Kids At Work, Kameraworld, Henlin, Anchor Milk and Gardenia Bread will also be there to bring more fun and additional treats for everyone.



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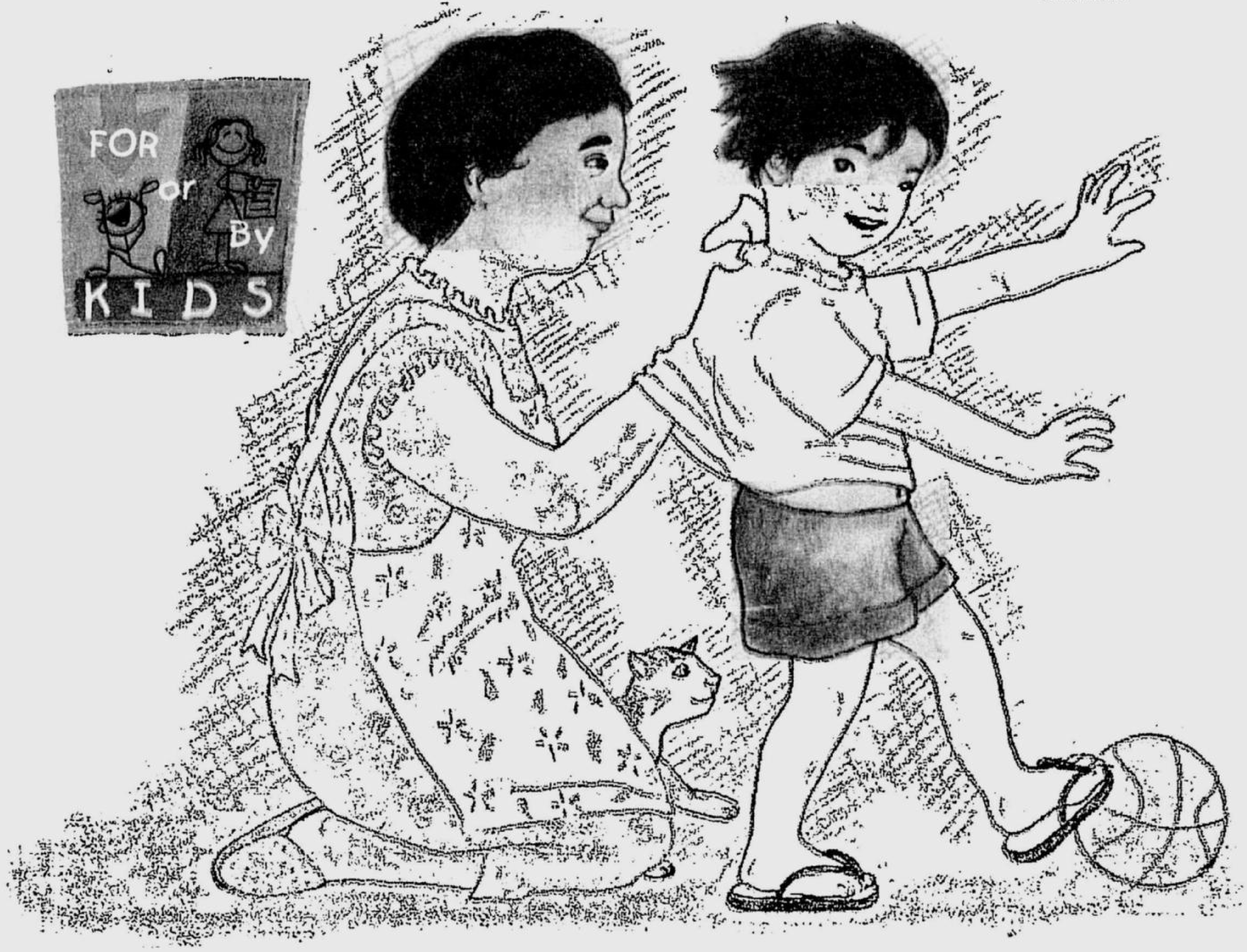

ANG AKING YAYA ASUN

Kuwento ni Genaro R. Gojo Cruz
Guhit ni Herbeth Fondevilla

ANG aking Yaya Asun ay magaling na doktor, titser at kaibigan.

Kapag ilong ko ay barado dahil sa sipon, kaagad siyang kukuha ng mainit na tubig. Mayroon siyang ilalagay sa mainit na tubig na di ko alam.

Magtatalukbong kami ng kumot, at sa loob ako'y magpasisinghot-singhot. At matatanggal ang bara ng aking namumulang ilong.

Kapag ako ay nahihilo sa biyaheng sobrang layo, baon niya palagi ay pinitpit na dahon ng bayabas, ipapaamoy niya ito sa akin kahit daan ay paliko-liko. Pinitpit na dahon ng bayabas pala ay mabisang gamot sa batang mahiluhin tulad ko. Nakaabang din lagi ang kanyang malaking supot.

Kapag masakit ang aking tiyan dahil sa sobrang kabag, padadapain niya ako sa kanyang malambot na unan, at bigla mararamdaman kong tila umimpis na lobo ang aking tiyan.

Kapag ako ay pawis na pawis sa sobrang paglalaro, hindi nawawala ang tuwalyang inilalagay ni Yaya Asun sa aking likod. Ako'y maginhawa kahit sa katatakbo'y magkatisod-tisod.

Sa gabing di ako makatulog, tatapik-tapikin niya ako nang dahan-dahan. Hihimas-himasin niya ang aking buhok habang siya'y umaawit ng mga kundiman, magaling talagang magpatulog si Yaya Asun lalo na't bagong palit ang punda ng unan.

Pagpasok sa eskuwela'y lagi kong inaalala bilin ni Yaya Asun: "*Baon mong sandwich at juice ay laging ubusin,huwag magtitira dahil baka pagkain mo'y biglang bawiin.*"

Isa pang bilin ni Yaya Asun, "*Huwag kalimutang maglagay ng tuwalya sa likod kapag pinagpapawisan, mahirap ang magkasakit, umabsent sa klase at maging marka sa kard ay magka-itlog-itlog.*"

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SI HERBETH
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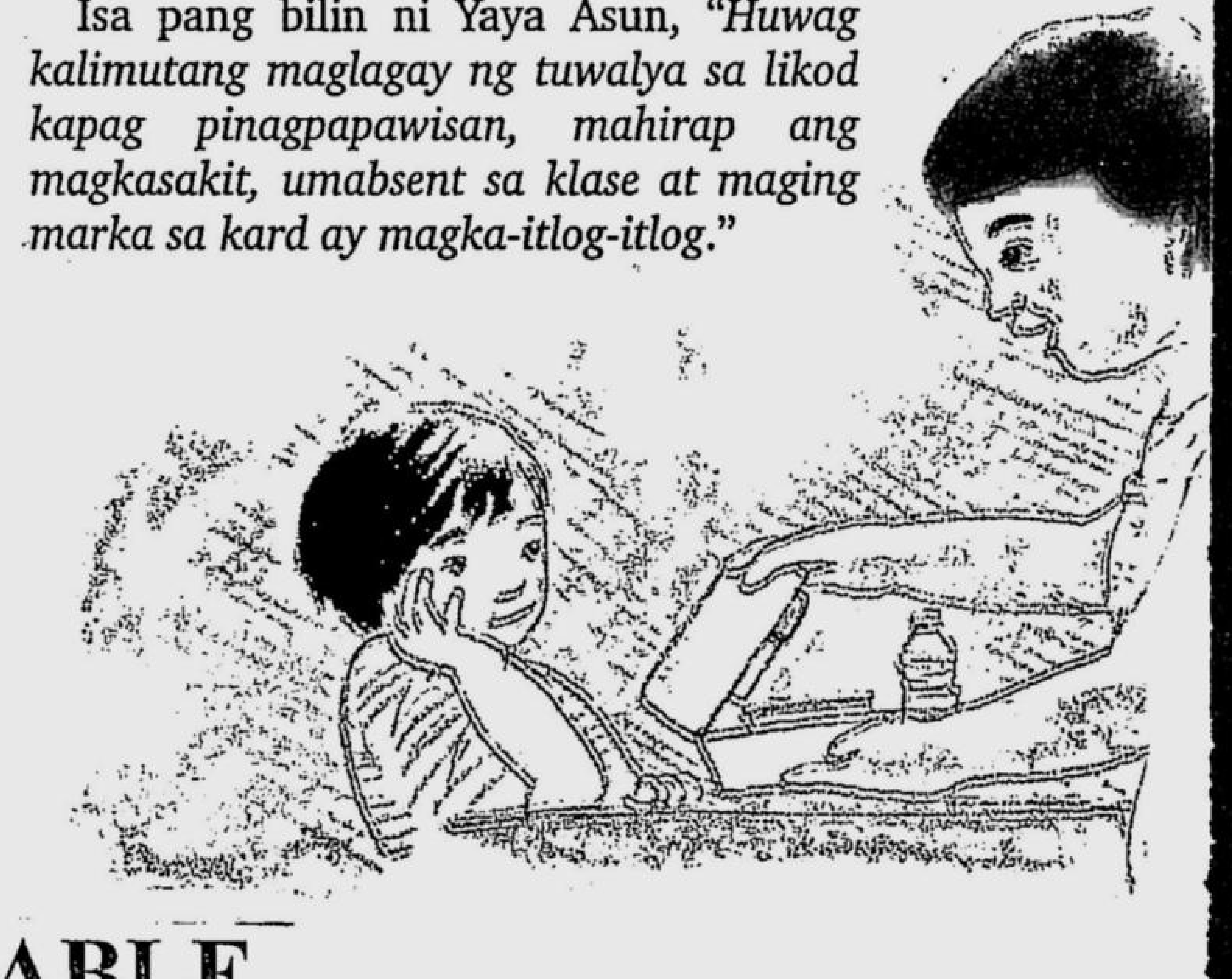

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o ang mga bilin ni Yaya
kasi, siya ang aking maga-
guro at kaibigan. Ngunit
takang-taka dahil walang
un kahit isa.

ang niya ako sa balikat at
ong pag-uwi mamaya, baka
abutan, kailangan kong
ng probinsya. Babalik ako
yos ang mga anak at pam-
n."

asama ko talaga si Yaya
bahay. Mayroon pa pala
ukod sa aming bahay. May-
g kanyang sariling probin-
am. Mayroon pala siyang
ukod sa aming pamilya.

Yaya Asun, "*Ayos lang yon,*
ka." Kinuha ko ang aking
na ako sa tarangkahan at
nating ang aking matuling
aking pagsakay at nang
ing upuan, hindi maubos-
yan namin ng aking mahal
habang tumatakbo ang ak-
y biglang naisip ko, parang
ama sa probinsya ng aking
ang aking Yaya Asun.

ay tubong Bulacan.
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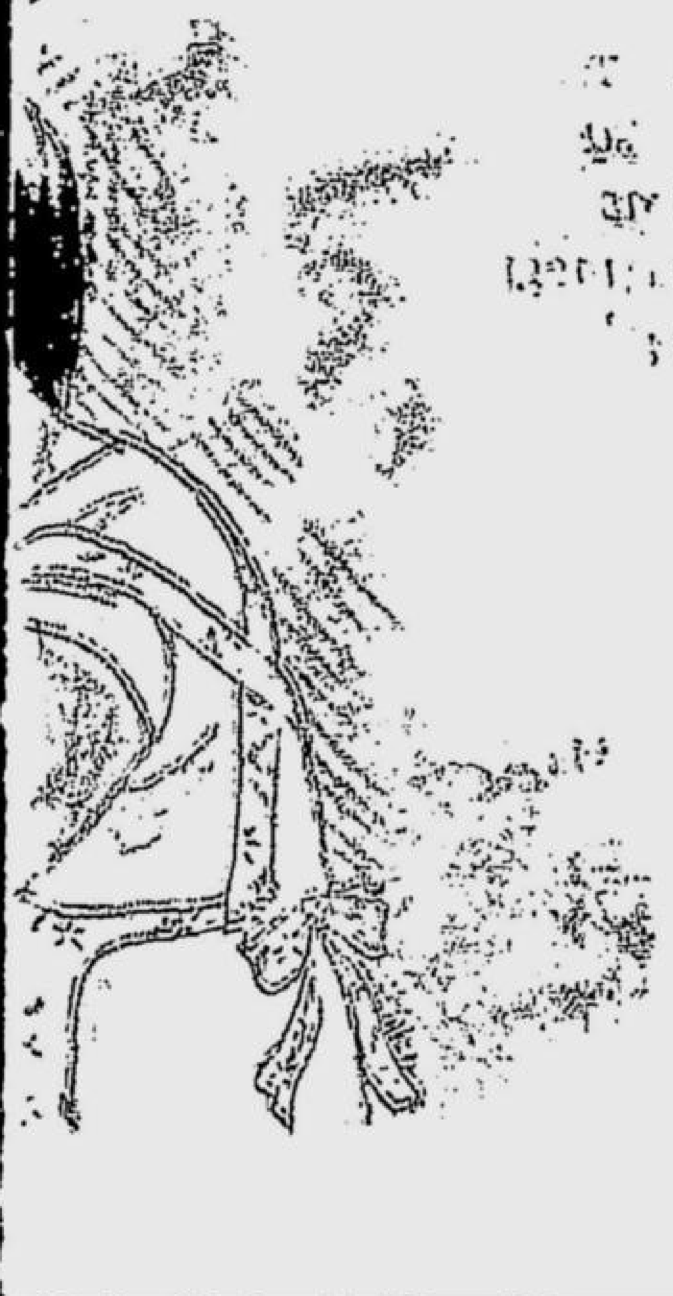

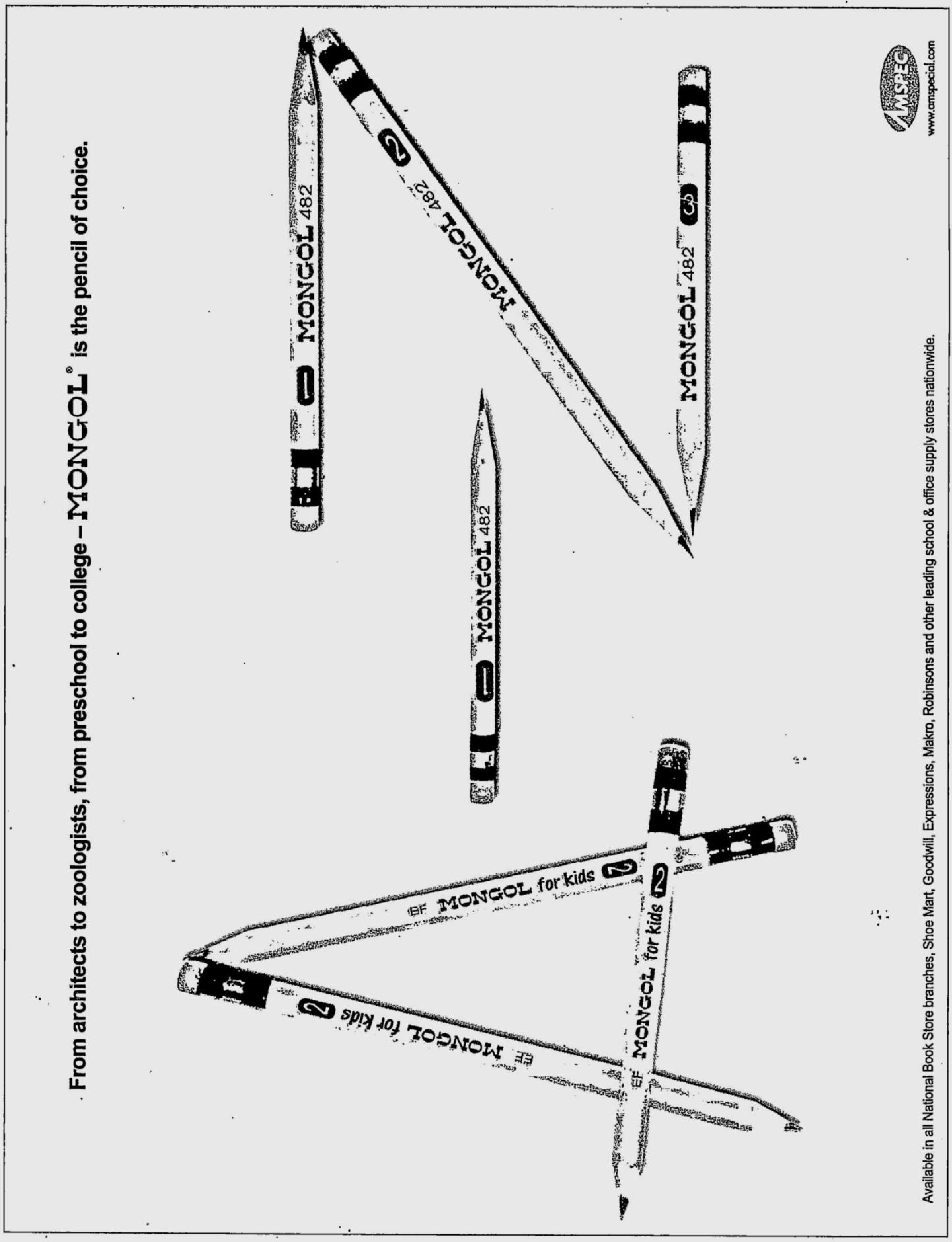

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SIMPLY Trixie

A regular theater buff and St. Scho-Manila's up-and-coming photojournalist

By Agatha Guidaben

TRIXIE Esguerra's name has a pixyish ring to it. Her mom Consuelo deliberately kept it short and simple, probably so pre-school Trixie wouldn't find it difficult to write down.

Now that she's 12 years old, Trixie not only writes—she draws and takes pictures, too. In fact, this incoming second year high school student at St. Scholastica's College Manila is the artist-photojournalist of the school paper, The Blue Flame.

Aside from showing up with a camera during extra-curricular activities, Trixie has also appeared in theater productions. She fondly recalls the staging of a Shakespearean comedy in her school when she was in Grade 6. She played a fairy king's whimsical sprite-sidekick.

"I was Puck (Robin Goodfellow) in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,'" Trixie narrates. As one of the lead characters, she had to memorize a lot of lines. She was also the assistant stage manager, so she had to run every once in a while backstage to check if the microphones were in place or if the actors in the next scene were ready in the wings.

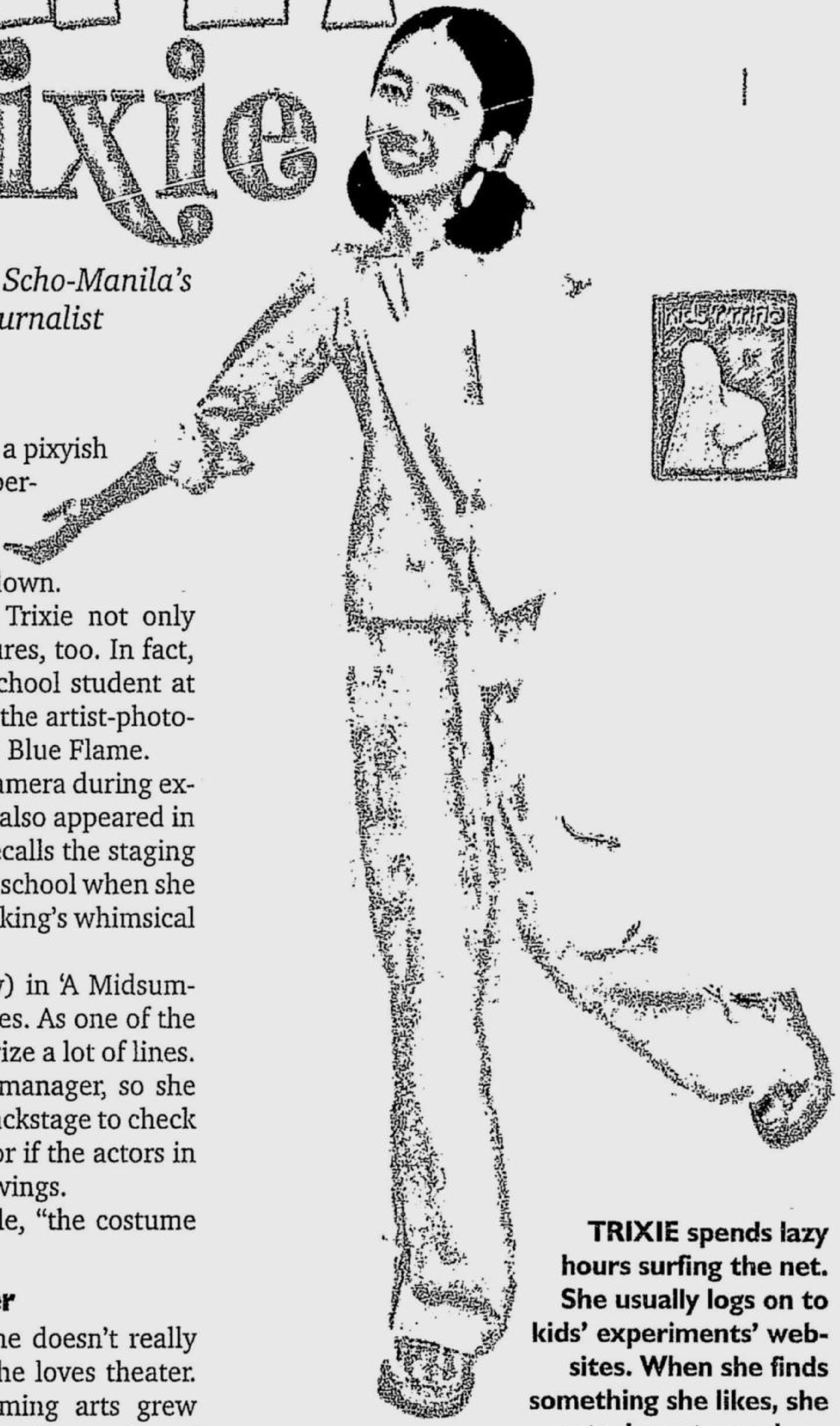
As if that wasn't enough trouble, "the costume was itchy!" Trixie exclaims.

The Actress in Her

But other than the costume, she doesn't really mind performing at all. In fact, she loves theater. Her fascination with the performing arts grew when her folks took her to the Manila staging of "Miss Saigon" some years back. Soon after, she attended two consecutive summer workshops organized by Repertory Philippines. She even got to sing songs from Disney and the musical, "Annie," in the workshop's culminating activity!

Now that school's over, Trixie has more time to relax. Freshman year turned out to be quite fun, "although there were a lot of assignments and projects compared to elementary schoolwork," Trixie hastens to add. "I had to learn how to prioritize my time and set TV aside."

Well, Trixie, you only have a few more weeks of TV watching. Summer's nearly over and then it's back to school!



TRIXIE spends lazy hours surfing the net. She usually logs on to kids' experiments' websites. When she finds something she likes, she sets down to work on the project. ROGER CARPIO

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'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
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If you think you're 'Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!

Kid 'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate:____________________
____

Age: ____________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

She/he lives at ____________________
____
____

and studies at ____________________
____

Her/his contact number is: ______
____

Sender's Name: ____________________
____

Sender's Age & School:__________
____

Sender's Address: ____________________
____

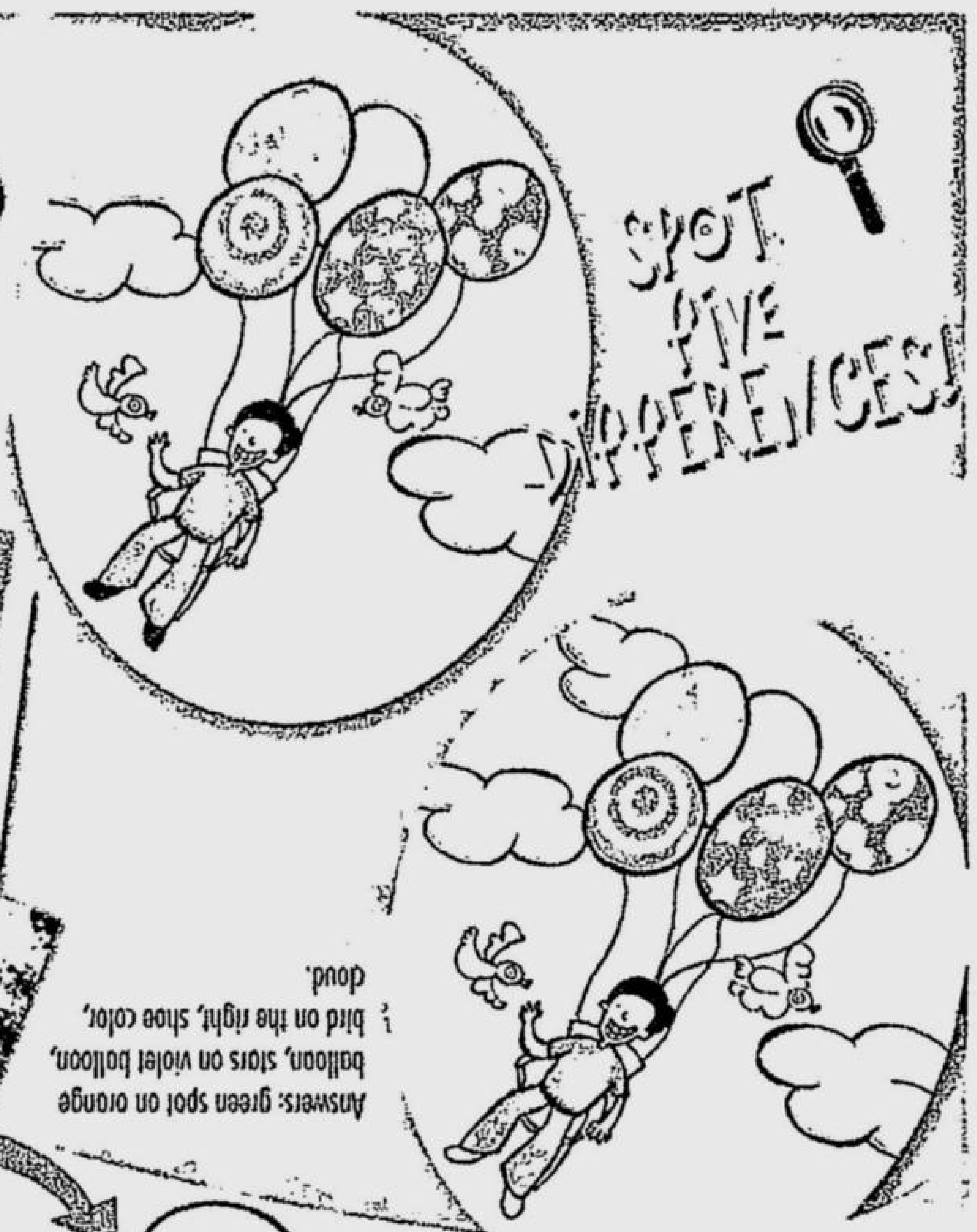
Sender's Contact No. ____________________
____

THE LUNCH BOX

by Katrina B. Villa

In July 2, 1982 a truck driver named Larry Walters strapped himself to an aluminum lawn chair tied to 42 helium-filled weather balloons. He stayed in the air for 90 minutes, reached 16,000 feet and was actually spotted by two commercial airliners. At that height though, his feet started getting so cold, that he had to take his pellet gun and shoot at some of the balloons to get him back on the ground. He was fined by the US Federal Aviation Authority for reckless operation of an aircraft, and for flying a craft that didn't have an airworthiness certificate.

BEST NOT TO TRY THIS AT HOME!


SPOT FIVE DIFFERENCES!

Answers: green spot on orange balloon, stars on violet balloon, bird on the right, shoe color, cloud.

NOY'S NOTEBOOK

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has a list of 730 places across the globe that are considered **World Heritage Sites** -- places so special that they have been declared treasures for all the people of the world, to be preserved and protected for all time.

Guess what? We have 5 World Heritage Sites right here in the Philippines!

BREAK THE CODE AND FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE!

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4 25 19 15 4

Each number corresponds to a different letter or symbol. Fill in the boxes with the right letter!

1(O) • 2(P) • 3(Q) • 4(R) • 5(S) • 6(T) • 7(.) • 8(,) • 9(I) • 10(')
11(A) • 12(B) • 13(C) • 14(D) • 15(E) • 16(F) • 17(G) • 18(U)
19(V) • 20(W) • 21(X) • 22(Y) • 23(Z) • 24(H) • 25(I) • 26(J)
27(K) • 28(L) • 29(M) • 30(N)

Answers: Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Tubbataha Reef, Historic Town of Vigan, Cordillera Rice Terraces, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River

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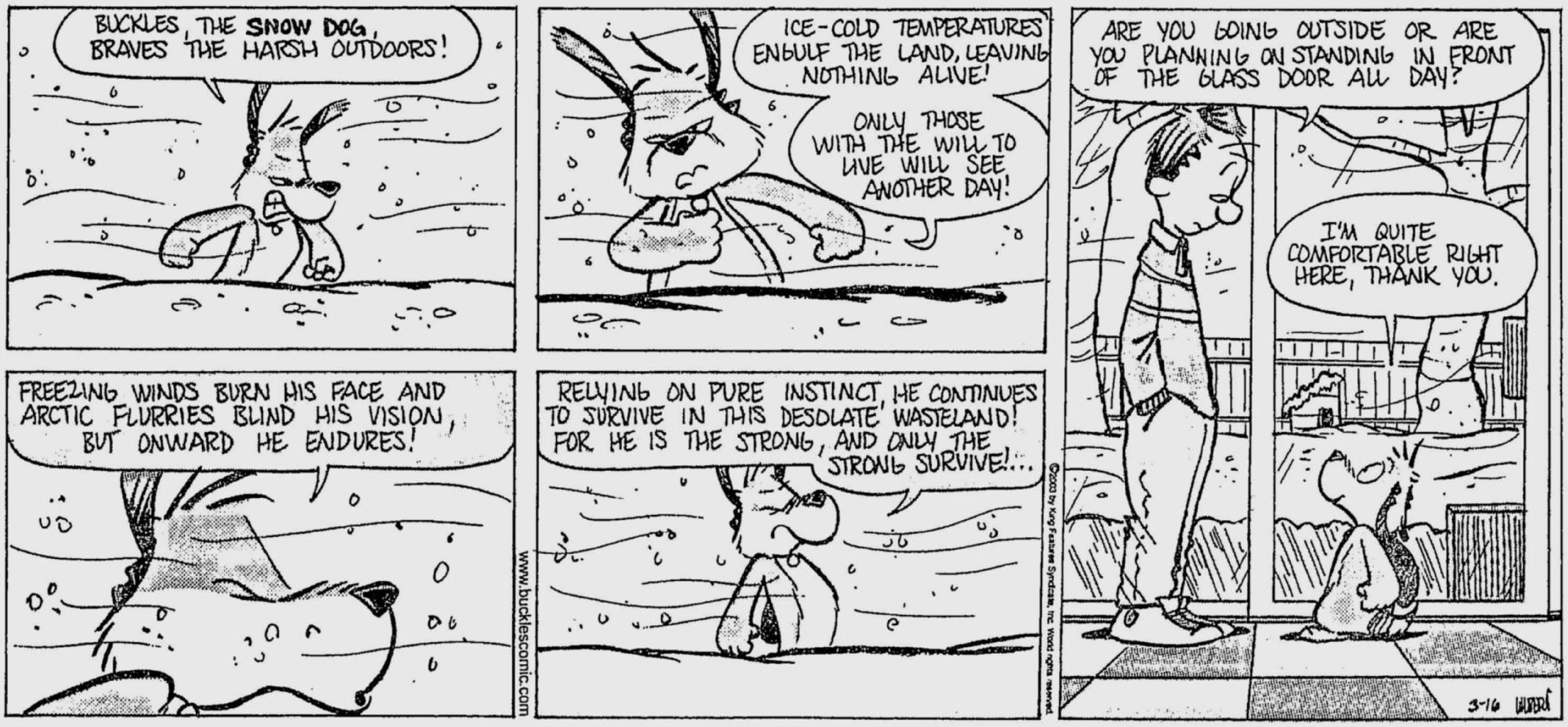
BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


BUCKLES, THE SNOW DOG, BRAVES THE HARSH OUTDOORS!
ICE-COLD TEMPERATURES ENGULF THE LAND, LEAVING NOTHING ALIVE!
ONLY THOSE WITH THE WILL TO LIVE WILL SEE ANOTHER DAY!
FREEZING WINDS BURN HIS FACE AND ARCTIC FLURRIES BLIND HIS VISION, BUT ONWARD HE ENDURES!
RELYING ON PURE INSTINCT, HE CONTINUES TO SURVIVE IN THIS DESOLATE WASTELAND! FOR HE IS THE STRONG, AND ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE!...
ARE YOU GOING OUTSIDE OR ARE YOU PLANNING ON STANDING IN FRONT OF THE GLASS DOOR ALL DAY?
I'M QUITE COMFORTABLE RIGHT HERE, THANK YOU.
3-16 GILBERT

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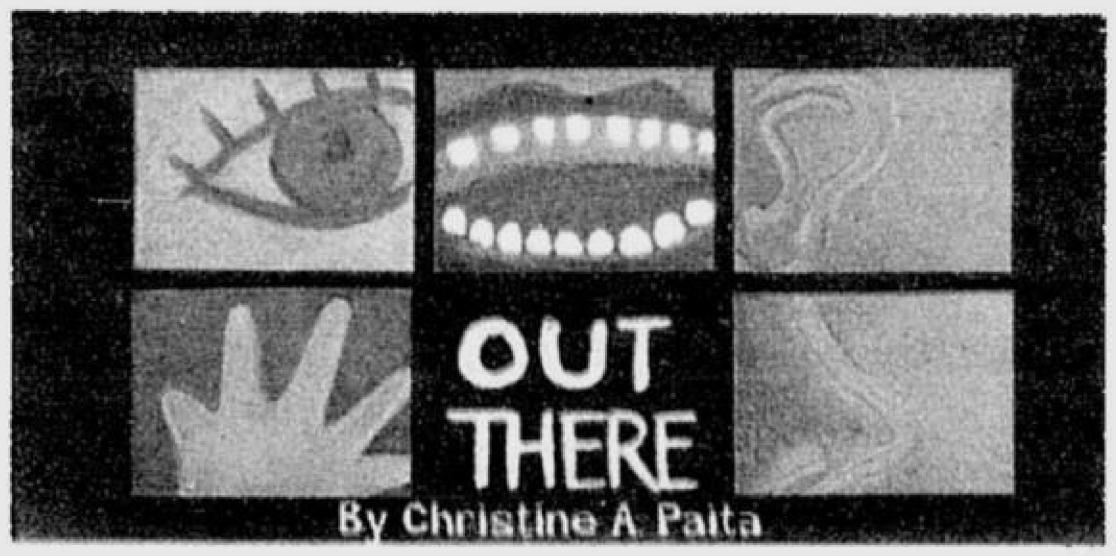

OUT THERE

By Christine A. Paita

Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax number is 897-4794, and our e-mail address is pr_junior_inquirer@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Workshops

ARTS AND CRAFTS. Hey kids, check out Jollibee's activities tomorrow. Learn how to make a **Wormy Picture Frame** from 9-11 a.m. in JB Royal Family Mall, Valenzuela; and on May 31, get your hands dirty in the **Decorative Pot Painting** workshop from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in JB Grand Central, Monumento and **Seal Mobile workshop** from 5-7 p.m. in JB Sumulong, Antipolo City. For details, call 363-4690.

LITTLE YOUNG COOKS. The Sacred Heart School now offers Vicky Veloso-Barrera's **Tiny Kitchen** for Pre-School, open to kids ages 3 to 7. Kids get to learn fun, easy, no-bake recipes for three weeks. Contact Sacred Heart School in the following branches: Makati, 810-8506; San Antonio Plaza Arcade, Forbes Park, 840-2632; Sun Valley, Parañaque, 823-1348 or 776-0312; Shangri-La Edsa Mall, Mandaluyong, 636-1227 or 631-9759; and Malabon, 447-3371 or 362-3154.

Activity

MUSEOLYMPICS. Come to Museo Pambata on May 30 at 9 a.m. for a whole day of playing fun **traditional Filipino games.** Watch as different barangays compete in the well-loved games of *sungka, patintero, palo sebo* and other relay games. Museo Pambata is located at Roxas Boulevard corner South Drive, Manila. Call 523-1797 or 98 for details.

Camp

HIGH-FLYIN' ADVENTURE. Have your final blast this summer at the **Subic High Adventure Camp** from May 27-31 in Subic Bay Freeport. Learn river and sea kayaking, rappelling, forest trekking, basic mountaineering and jungle survival from real adventure racers! For inquiries and registration, contact Ms Chinky Lazo at 637-0787 or 0917-8105550.

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